

Sports Illustrated

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THE NFL PLAYOFFS

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Bud fans pull switch, 50% choose Schlitz

Schlitz Chief hears results: "Not surprised"

The results of the TV taste test were not unexpected for Schlitz Chief Executive, Master Brewer Frank Sellinger, who joined the company three years ago. Sellinger was happy to put his Schlitz to a live TV test. "I'm not surprised," he commented. "My Schlitz can stand up to any premium beer." It seems a lot of Bud and Miller fans agree.

Bud loyalists state surprise over Schlitz choice

Panelists who pulled the switch for Schlitz were surprised. Similar reactions have been registered in other head-on comparisons across the country.

"I was genuinely surprised," said Guy D'Anne. "I thought Bud was better but I've been proved wrong!" "Well for crying out loud, I chose Schlitz!" exclaimed James Siger. "I've had good beers from all over the country, good German beers, too," attested Howard Kasbury. "Schlitz tasted better." Test referee Tommy Bell summed up the reactions of Bud drinkers who picked Schlitz. "You could've knocked a lot of those boys over with a feather," he said. "They were really impressed."



100 Budweiser loyalists chose between unlabelled mugs of today's Schlitz and their Budweiser — and former NFL Referee Tommy Bell, below, called the score for Schlitz in the live TV taste test.

Put your beer to the "Great American Beer Switch" test

This test requires two identical mugs, a Schlitz and your regular beer, at equal temperature. Label the mugs "1" and "2" so the taster won't know which beer is which. Pour the beers to equal levels out of the taster's sight.

To ensure that the choice is made on taste

alone, serve the beer in non-transparent mugs or have the taster close his eyes. Then he samples both (drinking as much of each as he wants) and chooses the beer that tastes better. Now you taste. Did you pick your regular brand? Or today's Schlitz?

Schlitz slates next challenge vs. Miller: AFC Championship

On the AFC Championship game, Schlitz will confront a leading premium beer again. Same time — just before second-half kickoff. Same rules. And again, with 100 loyal Miller drinkers. Will the

results be the same next Sunday? Or will even more of the judging team pull the switch for Schlitz this time?

There's no way of knowing, because it's all happening live. Tune in.

100 Bud loyalists tested on live TV; 50% pick today's Schlitz over Bud

TV sports fans watching Sunday's AFC Playoffs witnessed an extraordinary halftime contest. Today's Schlitz took on #1 Budweiser with 100 loyal Bud drinkers judging which beer they liked better.

The outcome surprised many Bud drinkers who found they preferred the taste of Schlitz.

Each of the 100 tasters was served two beers, one Schlitz and one Bud, in identical unlabelled mugs. They were then directed to pull an electronic switch to vote for the beer they preferred or to indicate "no preference."

The large score, testing was the first live TV test of its kind. Final results were unknown to anyone until the score flashed up on national TV.



38% of 100 Miller drinkers also chose Schlitz.

Schlitz' impressive showing against Budweiser was not the first time loyal beer drinkers picked Schlitz over their favorite brand. Just the day before, many fans of another top-selling beer, Miller, were also surprised to find they had selected Schlitz. A week before that, Schlitz had battled #1 Bud with similar success.

By taking on two lead-

ing beers Schlitz is registering a message about the taste of its beer. In his three years at Schlitz Chief Executive and Master Brewer Frank Sellinger has been concentrating on making Schlitz the best-tasting premium beer on the market. Now Schlitz is using some of Bud and Miller's customers to prove he's done it.





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SCORECARD

Edited by JERRY KIRSHENBAUM

SOLVING THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING GIPPER SCENES

One of Ronald Reagan's most memorable movie roles was his portrayal of George Gipp, the doomed Notre Dame halfback, in the 1940 Warner Brothers picture, *Knute Rockne—All American*. Mystifyingly, in 1956, when the pre-1948 Warner film library was sold for television distribution, 14 minutes of the 98-minute film, including some of the most famous sports-movie scenes ever shot, were cut from all circulating prints. In one deleted scene a dying Gipp implores Rockne, played by Pat O'Brien, to ask some future Irish team to "win just one for the Gipper." In a following scene, also excised, the famed coach recounts Gipp's entreaty to "win just one for the Gipper" to a locker room full of choked-up Notre Dame players, one of whom shouts, "Well, what are we waiting for?"

Despite their disappearance, those two scenes have remained firmly embedded in the public consciousness. After all, moviegoers did see them during the 1940s and well into the '50s. Further, bootleg and collectors' prints of the uncensored version of the film have survived; thus, the director of a 1971 documentary about Richard Nixon, *Millhouse*, was able to find footage of O'Brien's locker-room exhortation, which he juxtaposed with footage showing Nixon urging the 1968 G.O.P. convention to "win just one for Ike." The business about the Gipper has also been kept alive by O'Brien, who includes the locker-room plea in the Rockne impersonation he has performed endlessly on the banquet circuit and TV. Thanks in no small part to O'Brien and *Knute Rockne—All American*, winning one for the Gipper has become one of the hoiest of sporting clichés.

Given all this, it's hardly surprising that a howl of protest ensues whenever the abridged version of *Knute Rockne—All American* runs on the TV late show. There has been much misguided speculation about the reasons for the deletions, including suggestions that the film was simply poorly edited for TV, or that it was cut because of legal

objections raised by Rockne's heirs, a teammate of Gipp's or a sportswriter portrayed in the film. It has also been whispered that Reagan contrived to have the scenes excised for political reasons. But Reagan's political career didn't begin until the '60s, long after the cuts were made. In point of fact, Reagan eagerly sought the Gipp part, called it his favorite role and was said to be distressed when the edited version of *Knute Rockne—All American* appeared on TV in the late '50s without his big deathbed scene.

Another explanation offered for the cuts is that they were made because of legal action brought by Gipp's descen-



Reagan played Gipp, then he was cut

dants. Gipp and his family were Protestants, and a brother, Alexander Gipp, did indeed threaten to sue in 1940 because of the presence of a priest in the newly released movie's deathbed scene, which he felt implied that Gipp had converted to Catholicism. But nothing came of the threat. And the cuts, remember, weren't made until 16 years later.

So why were they made? The answer can be found in the Warner Brothers archives. Papers relating to the film confirm other evidence that while the real-life Rockne did implore his players to win a game for the Gipper, he did so on his own

and not because of any deathbed instructions from Gipp. Warner Brothers, in fact, lifted part of the deathbed scene and other material from a radio drama about Rockne that was broadcast on Dec. 5, 1938 on the DuPont-sponsored *The Cavalcade of America*. The studio paid \$300 to the radio author, a young ad agency writer named John H. Driscoll, but mistakenly used material from his script not covered by the purchase. After the movie's release, Driscoll complained and was paid an additional \$5,000. In striking this deal, Driscoll's lawyer apparently reserved certain radio rights for his client. Warner Brothers must have felt Driscoll also retained television rights because before it sold the film for TV in 1956, its lawyers ordered the now famous cuts "to eliminate any possible infringement of the Driscoll script."

The company that bought *Knute Rockne—All American* in 1956, Associated Artists Productions, was absorbed in 1958 by United Artists, which has never given any public indication that it knows exactly why the scenes were omitted, much less that it might care to restore them. However, with the man who played the Gipper about to be sworn in as President, the potential commercial value of the intact film may now, at last, make restoration worthwhile. Besides locating the missing footage, this would involve determining whether Driscoll still has any claim to TV rights. Driscoll is now 67 and works as story editor at RKO Pictures in New York. Reached last week by SI, he said, astonishingly, that he'd always assumed the movie scenes had been deleted because of legal trouble with Gipp's heirs. Told they had actually been removed out of respect for his own long-ago arrangement with Warner Brothers, he seemed amenable to removing whatever legal roadblocks remain, saying, "I'd love to see those scenes back in." Mawkish and not wholly accurate though the scenes may be, movie buffs, sports trivia-ists and the President-elect would all surely agree.

CONTINUED

THE CASE FOR ANARCHY

Georgia's 17-10 win over Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl pretty much settles things as far as this season's national championship in college football is concerned. But what of the controversy that so often has attended the question in other seasons? This magazine recently ran a polemic by Arnold Schechter in favor of a postseason playoff system for determining the champ (VIEWPOINT, Dec. 22-29), a call echoed last week by *New York Times* columnist Dave Anderson, who warned that until a playoff system is adopted, the scramble for the top spot in the sport will continue to produce "conjecture and confusion."

Well, it so happens that in addition to the bowls, which have a vested interest in preserving the status quo, some people actually prefer conjecture and confusion. One such anarchist is Washington State Coach Jim Walden, whose views are presented here in the interest of equal time: "There's always going to be an argument for a national playoff, but I think the healthiest thing we have going for us in college football is that there is no conclusive winner. I think it's beautiful that folks in the Pac-10 scream that Southern Cal is best, and other people scream that Alabama is best, that Ohio State is best or that nobody is better than Texas. We go through the winter arguing among ourselves. Look at college basketball. After the NCAA final, O.K., so everybody says, 'Ho-hum, Michigan State won,' or, last year, 'Louisville won.' It's cut and dried, and then there's no more interest in college basketball until December of the next season. And I say, 'God, why do we want to do that to ourselves?' I hope we never solve the argument."¹⁰

BUT THEY CAN COUNT TO NO. 1

That Georgia championship notwithstanding, certain Georgia Tech fans continue to look upon their intrastate rivals as so many hopeless rubes. This may account for the joke making the rounds about a talking computer in an Atlanta bank that asks anybody cashing a check to provide occupation and I.Q. If the customer is a brainy lawyer, the computer might process the check-cashing request while rattling off a summary of the latest Supreme Court decisions. In the case of a stockbroker, it might provide the latest Dow Jones quotations. And so on. Well, one day an unkempt fellow ambled up to the computer to cash a check

and was asked his occupation and I.Q. "Unemployed and 46," the man haltingly replied.

And the computer said, "How 'bout them Dawgs?"

BETTER SIGN UP, SAM

Seattle SuperSonics owner Sam Schulman has received a timely invitation from Dun & Bradstreet. Schulman is embroiled in a contract dispute with Gus Williams, the Sonics' scoring leader the past three years, that has kept the star guard on the sidelines so far this season. What's more, Schulman suffered a setback last week when Special Master Telford Taylor ruled that, because of a management blunder, Williams could become a free agent after this season and the Sonics would not be entitled to compensation should he sign with another team. The invitation from Dun & Bradstreet reads: "Acquire the skills you need to get your way—more often. Dun & Bradstreet presents a one-day seminar—Developing Effective Negotiating Skills."

SEPARATE AND MORE THAN EQUAL

Efforts are afoot to establish a Negro Baseball Hall of Fame in Ashland, Ky. Though there'll be no inductees, the proposed museum would contain memorabilia, films and oral histories documenting the lore and achievements of players in the old Negro leagues. The project is supported by Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn, the Hall of Fame at Cooperstown and the State of Kentucky, which has donated a suitable building. The Greater Ashland Foundation, a non-profit organization, is soliciting \$3 million to create a perpetual trust.

Is it outrageous that the stars of the Negro leagues, who were separate in real life, should now be confined to a separate museum? Well, in 1971 those long-neglected players became eligible for election to the Hall of Fame, but only nine have so far been inducted: Satchel Paige, Josh Gibson, Buck Leonard, Monte Irvin, Cool Papa Bell, Judy Johnson, Osear Charleston, Martin Dihigo and John Henry Lloyd. And at present Cooperstown devotes only a single display case to Negro baseball memorabilia. Cooperstown probably could have done more, but be that as it may, the Ashland museum seems the only means by which such obscure but gifted performers as Leon Day, Biz Mackey and Willie Wells will receive substantial recognition. Let

there be any doubt that such recognition is deserved, consider the evidence marshaled by John Holway, author of *Voices from the Great Black Baseball Leagues*. Holway unearthed records of 445 exhibition games between black teams and major league clubs from 1886 to 1948 and found that the black teams won more than 60% of them.

PICKING A LOCK

During the 1972 football season, a couple of Boston handicappers, Bob Dunbar and Bill Hilton, touted Boston College over Holy Cross, designating the selection, in a promotional filip, as the "lock of the year." The gimmick proved so irresistible that other handicappers soon began picking their locks of the year, not to mention locks of the week, bowl locks, Thanksgiving locks, playoff locks—everything but bugles and locks. As Dunbar recently told the *Washington Post's* Andrew Beyer, "It's becoming ridiculous. Pretty soon you're going to see advertisements for a Mother's Day Lock."

Despite all the imitators, Dunbar and Hilton, who call their service SCORE, have had the most luck with locks. Boston College, a 10-point favorite in '72, won 41-11, and SCORE claims in its ads that it also came up a winner on its next seven locks of the year. Rival handicappers point out that however its locks have done, SCORE has also had its share of losers. Regardless, when SCORE settled on Michigan over Washington in the Rose Bowl as this season's lock of the year, some bookmakers were sufficiently impressed to take the game off the board, and the Las Vegas line favoring Michigan briefly jumped from seven to 12 points before dropping back to eight. And since Michigan won, 23-6, the action figures to be even more torrid when next season's lock of the year is announced.

THEY SAID IT

● Ron Meyer, SMU coach, on the four touchdowns scored this past season by Mustang Defensive Back John Simmons: "I played 12 years on offense and didn't score as many points. I didn't score that many points in basketball."

● Bobby Bowden, Florida State football coach, after losing in the Orange Bowl to Oklahoma 18-17 on a Scooner touchdown and two-point conversion with 1:27 to play: "The one thing you can't say about us is that we didn't blow it at the end."¹¹

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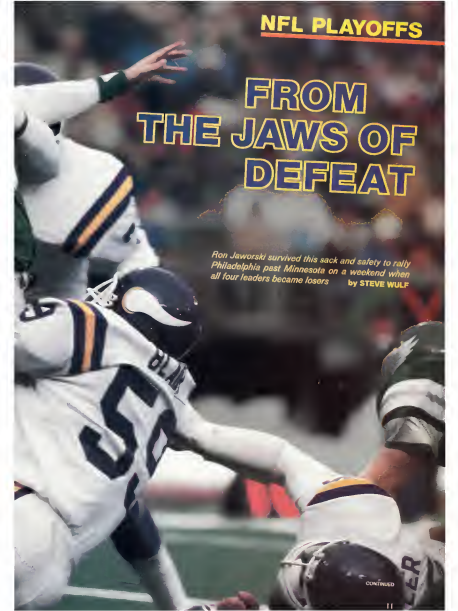
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JANUARY 12, 1981





NFL PLAYOFFS

FROM THE JAWS OF DEFEAT

Ron Jaworski survived this sack and safety to rally Philadelphia past Minnesota on a weekend when all four leaders became losers **by STEVE WULF**

CONTINUED

Return for just a moment to Sept. 14. On that day the Philadelphia Eagles whipped the Minnesota Vikings 42-7, and Eagle Coach Dick Vermeil rode off the field in Bloomington, Minn. on the considerable shoulders of defensive linemen Charlie Johnson and Claude Humphrey. Viking Coach Bud Grant was overheard to mutter that the second game of the season was hardly the Super Bowl.

Well, last Saturday, Vermeil, who is often accused of getting carried away, got carried away again by Johnson and Humphrey, again after beating the Vikings, this time in Philadelphia. On this occasion they had a good reason for doing it. The Eagles had rallied from 14 points down to win 31-16.

"I plan to carry Coach off the field two more times," Johnson said.

"We're grown men and we can do whatever we like," said Humphrey, who is 6' 5" and 258 pounds of grown man.

The game, however, didn't look as if it were played by grown men. There were 11 turnovers, and the Eagles were only because eight of them—all in the second half—were by the Vikings. Philadelphia shouldn't have needed such charity. The 12-4 Eagles were seven-point favorites over the NFC Central-champion Vikings, who at 9-7 virtually had to apologize for making the playoffs. When asked if he had anything in his bag of tricks for the Eagles, Grant said, "We emptied our bag just to get here."

So what was Minnesota doing with a 14-0 lead late in the second period? It was exactly as Philadelphia, which is somewhat desperate to be called the City of Champions, had feared. People were worried the "Iggles" would leave their game on the practice field in Tampa. Indeed, it was curious that Vermeil practiced in Tampa for a playoff game in Philadelphia when last year he practiced in Philadelphia for a playoff game in Tampa. In the meantime Grant, who has snow for hair and ice for eyes, kept his team in balmy Bloomington and a couple of days wouldn't even let them work out under their practice bubble.

The weather forecast called for a Froze Bowl, but at game time the temperature was 28°, warmer than the Vikings, who didn't even bother to plug in their "Hot Seats" on the sidelines, had hoped. Still, the Eagles were very cold at the start.



For Dick Vermeil taking a victory ride on the shoulders of Charlie Johnson (left) and Claude Humphrey.

Not even cheating could help Philadelphia. In the second quarter, Punter Max Runager quick-passed to John Sciarra for an apparent first down at the Vikings' 44, with a face-mask penalty tacked on. But the officials ruled that Sciarra had not lined up at least five yards from the sideline, in violation of the "hideout" law (Rule 12, Section 2, Article 14, paragraph f). It comes under the heading of unsportsmanlike conduct.

At that point it looked as if the only Eagle who would be carried off the field this day would be Wide Receiver Scott Fitzkee, who had broken his left foot, reducing the number of Philadelphia wide outs to two. But one of those two was Harold Carmichael, who ought to count as 1½. Quarterback Ron Jaworski took the Eagles 85 yards in 13 plays, throwing a nine-yard TD pass to Carmichael with just 54 seconds left in the half to cut the Vikings' lead to 14-7.

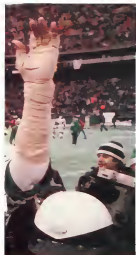
And the Eagle defense turned around in the second half because of a talking-to by Defensive Coordinator Marion Campbell. "We have the greatest respect for Marion," said Linebacker John Bunting, "so he doesn't have to raise his voice for us to listen. He did bring it up a pitch, though. He told us we weren't playing alert, we weren't playing Eagle defense." Said Cornerback Herman Edwards, "We figured if we were going to

lose, we were going to take somebody down with us." He had two of the five interceptions Tommy Kramer threw in the second half and held All-Pro Ahmad Rashad to just one catch.

Right away, the Eagle offense tied the score at 14-14 on a 66-yard drive, with Wilbert Montgomery plowing over from the eight. The Vikings put on their last drive of the game in the third quarter, but Kramer was intercepted by Roynell Young on the Eagle seven. Still, the drive indirectly resulted in two points for Minnesota—and a 16-14 lead—when Jaworski was sacked by Matt Blair and Doug Martin in the end zone.

The game turned firmly to Philly when Minnesota's Eddie Payton fumbled a punt and Reggie Wilkes recovered on the Viking 18. "First, I would like to apologize to the people of Minnesota," said Payton. "But I didn't go out there to fumble. The ball got caught up in the wind and instead of turning over, it turned back." But the swirling winds of fate may have had more to do with it—Minnesota has now lost the last game of the season 15 years in a row.

Montgomery took the ball in after the fumble for a 21-16 lead. From that point on, the game got totally zany. In the course of 19 plays, there were seven turnovers, some right after each other. Kramer fumbled, Montgomery fumbled,



is now old hat, as all the Vikings well know

Doog Paschal of the Vikings fumbled, Jaworski was intercepted, Kramer was intercepted, Jaworski was intercepted and Kramer was intercepted. Finally, Tony Franklin unwrapped his bare right foot and kicked a 33-yard field goal. Then Kramer was intercepted again on the Minnesota 45, and Edwards returned it to the 31. Eight plays later, Perry Harrington went over from the two. The last play of the game was, appropriately enough, a pass by Kramer again intercepted by Young.

Said Humphrey, who had one sack and kept up a constant conversation with Kramer during the game, "Hey, it's a funny-shaped ball. My God, that's a cliché, isn't it?"

The Eagles should be very grateful. Currently permenting the Philadelphia airwaves is a song called *The Eagles' 12 Days of Christmas*. Really bad. It goes something like, "On the 10th day of Christmas, [owner] Leonard Tose gave to me, Jerry Sisemore blocking. Guy Morris hiking. Bill Bergey crushing. [Brenard] Wilson intercepting. Carmichael catching. Will-bert Mont-go-mey-y's moooves, Humphrey attacking, Ron Jaworski passing, Tony Franklin kicking and a Duck Vernell Super Bowl team."

On the ninth day of Christmas, the Vikings gave the Eagles a playoff game.

EERIE END BY LAKE ERIE

by Bruce Newman

Oakland Safety Mike Davis realized something was desperately wrong the moment the Browns came to the line of scrimmage. "They're going to pass!" he said to himself. Trailing 14-12, Cleveland had a second down on the Raiders' 13-yard line with 49 seconds to play Sunday, and in those parts of his body in which he was still able to feel anything at all, Davis had felt certain the Browns wouldn't jeopardize their chances of winning the game with a short field goal. "We figured they would run the ball up the middle and then kick it," Davis said.

"What they did, though, was baffling."

What they did was pass. Cleveland couldn't resist taking one more shot at making a touchdown. Coach Sam Rutigliano had sent the word to Quarterback Brian Sipe: throw the ball to Wide Receiver Dave Logan in the end zone. "If nobody's open," Rutigliano instructed, "throw the ball into Lake Erie." Rutigliano reckoned that if the pass was incomplete, he could use one more down to run the ball, then send in Don Cockroft to kick a field goal that figured to be no longer than 30 yards.

continued

Mike Davis got perfect position on *Ozzy Newsome* and his end-zone interception saved Oakland's win





Nose warmers were the uniform of the day for fans in Cleveland, where the wind-chill factor was -30°

NFL PLAYOFFS *continued*

Cleveland Tight End Ozzie Newsome was surprised by the call, which would have him acting primarily as a decoy. "I was supposed to be a clear-out guy," he said. When the ball was snapped, Newsome glided straight for the end zone and hooked left, taking Davis and Free Safety Burgess Owens with him. Sipe, meanwhile, had decided that Logan was covered too well. Lake Eric beckoned, but Sipe had come too far too fast to dump it in the drink. When he saw Newsome's big, soft hands beyond the goal line, he let fly. The ball fluttered as it left his grasp, battling the same head wind that Rutigliano had feared would cause a field-goal try to come to grief.

"When I saw the ball coming and I felt him [Davis] on the inside, I knew it was trouble," Newsome said. Davis and Newsome leaped forward at the same instant, but the ball belonged to Davis—and the game to the Raiders, 14-12. "We've lived and died with the pass all year long," Newsome said in the glum Cleveland locker room. "This time we died."

The decision not to protect the ball and go for the field goal was Rutigliano's, and the way things turned out, it was certainly the wrong one. "It was no cinch for a field goal with the field conditions the way they were," Rutigliano

said in his own behalf. "We'd been having trouble with the snaps and holds all day." True enough. Cockroft had missed badly on attempts of 46 and 30 yards in the second quarter and had even blown an extra point. And a third-quarter field-goal try was muffed when holder Paul McDonald got a bad snap and couldn't get the ball down. But Cockroft had hit field goals of 30 and 29 yards in the third quarter, when he'd had the wind at his back. The question was, could he nail one from about 30 yards into the teeth of a 16-mph wind? Rutigliano wasn't sure, and if Rutigliano was to err, it wouldn't be on the side of indecision.

"I don't get paid to make the calls," Sipe said weakly. "I just do what I'm told." But when it counted most in Cleveland Stadium, it was Sipe's failure to do precisely as he was instructed that cost the Browns a chance to win the game. With all of Lake Erie in front of him, Sipe threw the ball to Mike Davis.

What made Sipe's error even more unforgivable was the fact that it was one of the few all-day not caused by the intense cold. The temperature on the field at kickoff was officially 1°, with a wind-chill factor of something like a million below. That made it the coldest NFL playoff game since the Dallas-Green Bay deep freeze in 1967, you've got to hand it to the NFL for keeping statistics like that. The

crowd of 77,835 tried a variety of methods to keep warm, including knitted nose warmers. The players did the best they could under the circumstances. The Browns fumbled six times but got five of them back; Oakland fumbled twice, losing one. The interceptions, however, were another story. Sipe had three passes picked off—the fatal one by Davis and two by Cornerback Lester Hayes.

Sipe had promised that if Hayes blitzed and gimbled, as he had so effectively against Houston the week before, Sipe would make a monkey out of him. "We're going to test him," Sipe said. "He's vulnerable. Let's see if he can cover the whole field." As Hayes proved to Sipe, he can do that and more. The Raiders seldom blitzed, and though they sacked Sipe only twice, they prevented him from throwing long for a touchdown. He completed a lackluster 13 of 40 passes and was able to throw more than two completions in a row just once.

The Raiders were a typical Oakland playoff team—mean and ugly and hungry. They generated only 64 yards of offense during 15 of their possessions, but on two others they ground out scoring drives of 64 and 80 yards in the second and fourth quarters, respectively. Both of those drives came when Oakland had the wind at its back—just as Cleveland had the wind for its two field goals. As Raider Quarterback Jim Plunkett (14 of 30 for 149 yards) pointed out, "Nobody scored against the wind today except Ron Bolton." Bolton, Cleveland's left cornerback, picked off a pass Plunkett had intended for Bob Chandler and returned it 42 yards for a touchdown and an early 6-0 Browns lead.

It was the kind of game in which you expected to see a lot of Chuck Mercein going over Gale Gillingham for three yards and a cloud of icicles, but both Rutigliano and Oakland Coach Tom Flores stayed with the passing games that had gotten them into the playoffs, even when the balls were ricocheting off numbed hands. The Raiders didn't complete any of the big plays that Managing General Partner Al Davis holds so dear to his heart, but Mark van Eeghen's two one-yard scoring plunges were good enough.

Rutigliano knew of Davis long before they confronted one another in the NFL because they had gone to the same high school in Brooklyn. "Al was ahead of me," said Rutigliano, "in a lot of ways."

Never more so than last Sunday.

ON A WING AND A PRAYER

by Ron Fimrite

Drew Pearson, the Dallas Cowboys' superlative wide receiver, swiftly ascertained that something was up—probably the football—when he glanced back from the goal line and saw that Quarterback Danny White's right hand was empty. "The next thing I saw," Pearson recalled later, "was the ball." There was nothing to do but catch it, which Pearson did—for the winning touchdown in the Cowboys' remarkable 30-27 comeback win over the Atlanta Falcons Sunday. There were 42 seconds left on the clock, and it was second-and-10 on the Atlanta 23-yard line when White ordered up "16 Wing 8," which calls for Pearson to run a simple post pattern. But there was nothing simple about it, because the Falcons did the unexpected, sending outside linebackers Al Richardson and Joel Williams in on a blitz.

"They're not a blitzing team," said White. "They're a zone team. I was unprepared for what happened."

"I was surprised," said Pearson. "They hadn't been blitzing that close to the end zone all day."

But White, startled as he was, instantly picked up the blitz. As the two linebackers pawed at his uniform, he, in his own words, "just put the ball up, hoping Drew would get to it somehow." Pearson admitted he never really understood what was happening. "I didn't pick up the blitz," he said, "but I did notice that [Falcons Left Cornerback Rolland] Lawrence came up and tried to dog me. I knew then there was something different going on, so I just speeded up my pattern, slipping by him and breaking clear and clean in the end zone."

There had seemed little doubt about the outcome to the Atlanta fans since

the middle of the third quarter, when Quarterback Steve Bartkowski had put the Falcons ahead 24-10 on a five-yard toss to William Andrews. Atlanta had got the ball in the first place under unusual, seemingly fated circumstances. White, operating from the Atlanta 49, dumped off a short pass to Preston Pearson, who snaked his way to the 15 before Williams stripped him of the ball and Safety Tom Priddy picked it up. Priddy was stopped in his tracks, but Drew Pearson, normally the cool veteran, pushed Falcon rookie Cornerback Kenny Johnson's face mask for a 15-yard penalty. "I just lost my poise," Pearson said. "It should be the other way around—the veteran riling the rookie."

Most of the Cowboys had been peeved at Johnson since the first quarter when he robbed them, with the blessing of Back Judge Stan Javie, of a touchdown, forcing them to settle for a field goal. White had hit Butch Johnson in the end zone for what seemed a certain TD. Dallas' Johnson caught the ball cleanly and appeared to take several steps with it before Atlanta's Johnson came in from behind and chopped it out of his hands. The official ruled "no catch" as Butch hollered in frustration. "I caught that ball," he said later. "I didn't juggle it. If you catch the ball in the end zone, it's a touchdown. It was a bad call."

The Falcons were leading 27-17 with 3:40 to play in the game when Danny and Drew worked the first of their wonders. On second-and-one from the Atlanta 14, White called a pass play with the prolix designation "Fire-Slant-26-B-Short-X-and-Y-Cross-Wing-7." Not for nothing is the Cowboy playbook compared to the *Principia Mathematica*. In lay terms, the play calls for Drew Pearson and his opposite number, Tony Hill, to run a crossing pattern while White fakes to a running back. The Falcons didn't blitz, and White scrambled in the backfield for what may have been 10 seconds in search of an open receiver. Just before releasing the ball, he pointed to the left corner of the end zone. "I wanted Drew to go back against the grain," he explained. Pearson missed the signal. "Everybody read that gesture but me," he says. "They all went to the corner. I stayed put, and he threw to me." White threw high, and Pearson made a spectacular leaping catch in front of the harassed Kenny Johnson. With Rafael Septien's point *continued*

Having beaten Rolland Lawrence, Drew Pearson of Dallas cradles the last gasp winning TD pass





Dallas' stumpy Robert Newhouse usually burrows under large linemen, but here he rises to conquer.

NFL PLAYOFFS continued

after, the score was Atlanta 27, Dallas 24.

When the Cowboys next got the ball, there was but a minute and 48 seconds to play and they were on their own 30-yard line. Roger Staubach routinely brought them into the end zone under such circumstances when he presided over the line of scrimmage. But White?

"Danny," says Drew Pearson,

"is a quarterback with a lot of poise."

"He has actually been better than I thought he would be," says Dallas Coach Tom Landry.

He was on this heart-stopping series, mixing screens with sideline patterns until he reached the Atlanta 23 as the crowd fell silent. Then that fateful blitz.

"I didn't expect anyone to catch that ball," said White. "It was the blitz that killed Atlanta."

SPEED KILLS THE BILLS

by Paul Zimmerman

Once upon a time they tilted the country so that all the pass catchers rolled to San Diego. It's not really fair. I mean, everybody knows about Charlie Joiner and J.J. Jefferson and Kellen Winslow and Chuck Muncie, but now here's a new guy who comes off the bench, beats the No. 1 defense in the NFL and puts the Chargers into the AFC title game.

The name is Ron Smith. Last Saturday he made the biggest play as the Chargers overcame Buffalo's 14-3 halftime lead and beat the Bills 20-14. It was a 50-yard touchdown grab that won the game with a little more than two minutes left. It wasn't a sensational catch; the play wasn't anything exotic, either. It was typical San Diego—a wide receiver lining up outside and then streaking to the inside. Miss the tackle and he's gone, folks.

Billy Simpson, the safetyman, found himself in an impossible coverage, and he missed the tackle.

You say you want to know who the devil is Ron Smith? Good question. Last year he found himself lost in a mob of pass catchers in L.A. Last September the Rams decided he was expendable, so Charger Coach Don Coryell handed over a draft choice—"a middle round . . . make that a high middle . . . actually I'm not sure," Coryell says—to Los Angeles for the privilege of adding Smith to his collection. And why under the wide blue sky would San Diego want another receiver?

"Speed," Coryell says. "When you can get it, you get it."

Remember, it was Smith who caught Lawrence McCutcheon's halfback option

pass for a 24-yard L.A. touchdown against Pittsburgh in last year's Super Bowl. And he caught another one—a 43-yarder—against Dallas in last year's divisional playoff. He caught only one pass in each of those games, but he made them count. Smith has caught just 21 regular-season passes in his three-year NFL career and only four as a Charger, and he was in Saturday's game because of an accident. Gregg McCrary, the inside tight end in San Diego's two-tight-end, one-running-back set, went out with a back injury on the first series, and the Chargers' whole game plan had to be reshuffled.

First they went with two backs, Muncie and Mike Thomas, and then they decided to sit Thomas down and go with a third wide receiver, John Floyd. They tried one pass to him, a deep fly pattern, and Simpson stayed with Floyd all the way and broke it up. Got to get more speed in there. Enter Ron Smith.

The first pass to him was on the same pattern as the game-winning TD, but Dan Fouts threw too early and Simpson broke it up. The second was a deep sideline, Smith tipped it, and Simpson intercepted deep in Buffalo territory. O.K., it happens. The only problem was that it came midway in the fourth quarter, with the Bills hanging by their fingernails to a one-point lead. The next, and last, pass to Smith was the TD. So, that's three catches in three



One Simpson hand couldn't halt two Smith feet.

playoff games for Smith—all for TDs.

The Bills had one last chance, but they were overmatched. Quarterback Joe Ferguson, hobbling on a badly sprained left ankle he had reinjured early in the game, was forced to throw off his heels all day in the face of a wicked San Diego rush, and his final pass was intercepted. A sad finish for a very game Buffalo team, but the percentages were working heavily against the Bills. San Diego was holding all the cards—including Smith.

At 6 feet and 185 pounds, Smith isn't imposing-looking. He is soft-spoken, almost apologetic. "We've got so many weapons on this team," he says, "that I felt like a spare tire trying to get out of the trunk." Yet he says he was very happy when he was traded: "I just wanted to get away from the Rams, with all their ups and downs. This team is pass-oriented, just like the San Diego State teams I played on. The Rams had all those running backs; they liked to run the ball. I didn't want to be there."

O.K., Smith's an action guy, a burner, so what was a safetymen doing in single coverage on him? "It was a strange coverage," Smith says. "The safety was actually lined up in a cornerback position. The whole middle was open. No way any safetymen in the league can cover me across the field."

The answer: simple arithmetic dictates that it isn't possible to double-cover every San Diego receiver. There are too many of them. Jefferson, Joiner and Winslow, who combined for 242 catches this season—there were five NFL teams that didn't complete that many passes—were strung out on a picket line on the left side. The Bills assigned four of the five backs in their nickel setup to cover that threesome. They blitzed two linebackers inside; their whole game plan had been geared to worrying Fouts with an exotic set of blitzes, and it had been quite effective. That left Simpson in single coverage on Smith, and it just didn't work out.

"If Fouts has time to throw, it's a hard coverage, real hard," said Simpson, who was coaxed out of retirement 12 weeks ago when the Bills' secondary got banged up. "Our blitzes had been successful. This time they picked it up. I'd broken up a pass two times in the game. This time I didn't. Unfortunately this is the one everybody will remember."

Blitzing Fouts repeatedly, as the Bills did, is a daring way to travel, but the



The gimpy Ferguson was intercepted three times, with this one being returned 20 yards by Mike Fuller.

Chargers are a team that can carve you up in a hurry if you sit back and play coverages. Very fresh in Buffalo Coach Chuck Knox's mind was the way the Chargers worked the Steelers over in the last regular-season game, the one that got San Diego into the playoffs. Pittsburgh opened with a nickel back replacing a linebacker, and the Chargers beat it with Muncie running the ball. When the Steelers reverted to a normal alignment, the Chargers set their receivers wide, singly and in pairs, and then ran them across the middle, and Fouts kept finding them.

"Fouts doesn't like pressure up the gut," Knox said before the game. "We've got to get an inside rush on him and get it early. We've got to bloody his nose." Buffalo's defensive coordinator, Tom Catlin, drew up the blitzes, and when he presented them to the squad, "Everyone was excited as hell," as Linebacker Phil Villapiano said. "We figured if there was one way to beat that San Diego offense, this was it."

Catlin put in blitzes from a 4-3, which Buffalo hadn't used this year, and from overshifts and from an old Kansas City Stack defense, which featured Ben Williams, the sacking end, doing a wide loop and coming in over the middle. And then he put in a whacko alignment called Krazy Kat, which set two linebackers on the line, in defensive tackle positions, and stacked Defensive End Sherman White behind Noseguard Fred Smerlas as a middle linebacker and

had the two of them stunting and rushing.

It worked brilliantly. The 6' 6" White came barreling up the middle, untouched, twice and raised hell. There was constant pressure, early throws before the receivers were in position, a couple of sacks. "That one blitz where White lines up as a middle linebacker was weird," said Charger Guard Ed White. "I'd never seen anything like it. But we did pick up their blitz on that last touchdown, and then they were in trouble."

Even so, with a very minimal offense—97 yards rushing, 147 passing—the Bills took a 14-13 lead into the last few minutes. In the end, they were beaten by numbers, by superstars—and one superburner who came out of the woodwork. That's no surprise.

The Chargers were willing to try anything or anyone this year. In September they gave New Orleans a No. 2 draft choice for Muncie, whose erratic habits had labeled him an untouchable by many NFL teams. The upset was that they beat Al Davis and the Oakland Raiders to Muncie, and now it's Davis' Raiders they play this Sunday for the AFC Championship.

"You know, for many years I had this division to myself," Davis said last week. "I was the only guy who'd take a chance on people like Muncie and John Matuzak, the kind of people other teams branded as troublemakers. Now there's another one—that guy Coryell. He's a real pain in the butt."

END

THE BALL BOUNCES GEORGIA'S WAY

Taking advantage of every gift Notre Dame offered—and there were plenty—the Bulldogs seized an early lead and then held on to win 17-10 in the Sugar Bowl, remain undefeated and nail down the national title **by DOUGLAS S. LOONEY**

Erk Russell, Georgia's defensive coordinator, was relaxing in a New Orleans bar last Wednesday, contemplating the No. 1-ranked Bulldogs' chances against Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl the next day. "We could get mashed pretty good," he said. "They're going to line up and try to run it down our throats, and they're big enough to do it. My hope is that we can be lucky one more time. Please, just one more time."

Sure enough, before a crowd of 77,895 in the Superdome, Notre Dame ran the ball down Georgia's throat, getting 328 yards total offense to the Dogs' 127. Considering that Herschel Walker ran for 150

yards all by himself, that meant the rest of the Bulldog ballcarriers needed back-up lights on their hip pads. Notre Dame, which theretofore had a pitiful passing attack, even threw it down Georgia's throat—138 yards to seven. The Dogs' only completion came with just two minutes remaining in the game.

But, sure enough, Georgia was wonderfully, incredibly, implausibly lucky one more time, somehow contriving to whap the Fighting Irish 17-10 while losing badly to them in every major statistical category. But then, people are always saying they'd rather be lucky than good, and that perfectly describes the

Bulldogs. "I don't know how good we are," says their coach, Vince Dooley, "but I do know we're 12-0 and nobody else is."

For Georgia, 1980 was a year, luckily, in which it wasn't slated to play Alabama. In fact, its schedule included no team that finished in the Top 20. It was also a year in which, luckily, Superman, in the guise of Walker, arrived in Athens, Ga., and a year in which, luckily, the Dogs suffered few severe injuries, especially at positions where they were thin.

In the opener against Tennessee, Quarterback Buck Belue fumbled three snaps from center, but Georgia won



16-15. Against Clemson the Dogs were outgained in the first half 239 yards to 33—but led 14-10. Against South Carolina Georgia was leading 13-10, but the Gamecocks were daring for the winning touchdown when Heisman Trophy-winner George Rogers fumbled on the Bulldog 17 with some five minutes to play. Against Florida the Dogs were dead, down 21-20 and mired on their own 7 with 1:32 to play, when Belue scrambled and threw a relatively short pass to Split End Lindsay Scott, who caught it just as the man guarding him slipped. Scott raced 74 yards for the winning points. Even Dooley said, "Realistically, you'd have to say we'd lost that game."

Which, realistically, is what occurred in the Sugar Bowl. Joe Yonto, Notre Dame's defensive coordinator, had said jokingly before the game, "If they don't run and don't pass, we'll really shut them off." That's precisely what happened. Ex-

continued



It would've been an 85th TD had Holohan come down with the ball, but Wuerner intercepted.

When Notre Dame neglected to field a kickoff, Bob Kelly (28) recovered to set up an easy score.



As usual, Georgia had little offense except Walker, who rushed for 150 yards and scored twice.



When Oliver's second field-goal try was blocked, it was soon 3-3 instead of 6-0 Notre Dame.



GEORGIA continued

cept, nobody had factored in the Irish death wish. "We stunk," said one Irish coach. It was worse than that, and some of the Notre Dame play-calling at crucial junctures was misguided.

The Notre Dame blunders started late in the first quarter, after Harry Oliver's 50-yard field goal had given the Irish a 3-0 lead. Notre Dame came right back down the field, and Harry O lined up to kick what for him would be a routine 48-yarder. Except that the snap was high and Terry Hooge, a reserve defensive back for the Dogs, rose up to block the kick. Hooge was among the last of the Georgia players given a scholarship during 1980 recruiting and was allowed to make only two road trips this year. His total playing time for the regular season was five minutes, all of them coming when the game was clearly won.

Several weeks ago the Georgia coaches had the scrubs line up in practice and try to block kicks. Hooge was successful on several attempts. His talent didn't go unnoticed, and he was tacked onto the Sugar Bowl roster. For his big moment he lined up five yards back on the weak side, from where "I saw kind of a little hole and just sailed through." This was the key play, because it proved to Georgia—already worried that if the Irish didn't get them, the Notre Dame mystique would—that good things can come to those who dare challenge the Irish. Lucky that Hooge made the trip.

The Dogs recovered on the Irish 49, and nine plays later, Rex Robinson kicked a 46-yard field goal to make it 3-3. On the ensuing kickoff came the Notre Dame mistake that, more than any other, gave Georgia the national championship. The ball rose lazily into the Superdome stillness and then floated to the ground, untouched, indeed seemingly almost unnoticed by Notre Dame kick returners Jim Stone and Ty Barber. Stone says he called for Barber to catch it; Barber says that message never reached his ears. Whatever, Georgia's umung Kelly brothers soon arrived on the scene. Brother Steve dove at the ball and hit it, and it popped into Bob's hands on the one. "When opportunity strikes," says Bob, "you have to take advantage of it." Stone and Barber had been handling kickoffs together for two years with-

Chris Welton (10) recovered this Notre Dame fumble, leading to Georgia's second touchdown.

out mishap. Clearly, Georgia didn't force the error. The Dogs were, simply, lucky. Two plays later, leaping up and over from the one like the shooting star he is, Walker scored.

Shortly afterward, usually sure-handed Irish Fullback John Sweeney dropped the ball on his own 20 despite the absence of any serious hitting. The Dogs again recovered. Three plays later, Walker glided around the right side for three yards and a touchdown to make it 17-3.

Thereafter, the Bulldogs hung on tenaciously. Twice in the third quarter Notre Dame bottled down to the Georgia 13 but came up empty, thanks to an end-zone interception by Scott Woerner and a missed field goal by Oliver. Finally, Irish Halfback Phil Carter, who gained 109 yards in 27 carries, bolted over from the one to close the gap to 17-10.

In the fourth quarter, Notre Dame kept applying the pressure, but to no avail. With three minutes to play, Notre Dame made one last effort, reaching the Georgia 48. There was still plenty of time to drive for a TD and a two-point conversion, but on fourth down and with less than a yard to go, Notre Dame elected to cross up Georgia and shoot, not for the first down but for the works. Quarterback Blair Kiel dropped back to pass, was pressured heavily by two Georgia linemen and looped a hurried pass that the omnipresent Woerner had no trouble intercepting. Bye-bye ball game. "There was a little luck involved," said Woerner of his two interceptions.

As he is every time he snaps his chin strap, Walker was the star, demonstrating all the best qualities of Earl Campbell and Tony Dorsett. Whatever your picture is of a dream back, he fits it. But as stylish as Walker can be, there wasn't much finesse in the Dog offense. Assistant Coach John Kasay isn't shy about admitting that "what we do is hand it to the big rascal and pound it at them." In short, Georgia is a genuine ranty in football, a one-man team—at least on offense. Everybody connected with the Dogs denies it, but Dooley at least tells a half-truth when he says, "If we were solely dependent on Herschel, we'd be in bad shape, but if we didn't have him, we'd be in bad shape."

Nobody disputes Dooley when he looks at Walker and says, "I deserve to have him on my team. After all, I've spent years looking across at these great players performing for somebody else."

For Dooley, the coach at Georgia since 1964 and a very good man at his job, this season was his finest piece of work. A certain amount of what he says comes under the heading of blowing smoke for the benefit of opposition ears, but in private few coaches are better at accurately appraising their teams than Dooley is. Neither his secondary nor his linebackers were fast, he says; his defense wasn't good at sacking the quarterback; the offensive line wasn't close in ability to his exceptional one of 1976; the team as a whole wasn't close to his 8-1-2 squad of 1968. He shakes his head and says, "All this is sort of an impossible dream for this team."

But what the Dogs did, in addition to drinking weekly and deeply from the well of luck, was to play their hearts out, to perform at the peak of their ability all of the time. They play disciplined football. They didn't fumble against Notre Dame or throw an interception. And when the Irish erred, the Bulldogs capitalized. They played the same way all year. They led the nation in turnover margin.

For Notre Dame's Dan Devine, catching his last game for the Irish, it was a gloomy finale. "I thought we would pull it out," he said. Of course. At Notre Dame, that's how the stories end. And while there was no feeling that the players wanted desperately to win one for the Danner, the legacy Devine leaves incoming Coach Gerry Faust is a rich one, even by Notre Dame standards. His record for his six seasons at South Bend is 53-16-1 and one national title, showing that as a coach he has very few equals. He also leaves the Irish with a team loaded with talent, a testament to his recruiting skill. And he departs with his reputation for honesty intact, no small accomplishment these days.

As for Dooley, he had to know there were beneficent forces at work this season when a car he was driving last October was struck by another vehicle—silver on top, black on the bottom, red in the interior, which are Georgia's uniform colors. The Dooley car spun around, leaving tire tracks all over a parking of a Bulldog which had just been rendered for homecoming festivities at Athens' main intersection. Both Dooley and his wife, Barbara, could have been killed, and while Barbara was seriously hurt, she is now fully recovered. "We were very lucky," she says. Of course.

END

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A REAL NOWHERE MAN

Living in his own nowhere land, which for him is the area around Providence, Ernie D hasn't competed in an NBA game since 1978 by RICK TELANDER

It was the summer of 1974, perhaps Ernie DiGregorio's best summer ever, and he was sitting by the outdoor tennis courts at Providence College. A reporter had stopped by, not to dig but merely to chat, to enjoy the sun and see what Ernie D was thinking. Ernie D was thinking about basketball, of course.

"You know," he said, "nobody gets up at six in the morning to play ball. But I did. When I was 12 my mind was made up that I was going to play pro ball. TV did it to me, I think—watching all those Providence fans go crazy. I started practicing nine, 10 hours a day. By myself. In the heat, the rain, the snow, with gloves on. And I loved it. You couldn't have made me stop."

He leaned back against the fence, amused by the image of that dedicated kid, by the rightness and simplicity of the fact that he had become the starting point guard for the Buffalo Braves of the NBA. Not quite six feet tall, chunky, slow, with short arms, stubby fingers and no jumping ability, Ernie D must have realized early on that he had no business excelling at basketball, a game for sequoias, for antelopes. What had kept him going all those years, the reporter wondered.

Ernie said, "Well, I remember the last day of class my sophomore year in high school. It was 95 out and everybody was going to the beach at Narragansett. They said, 'Come on, Ernie, you're gonna turn into a basketball.' But I went to the court

over at the grade school by myself, as usual, sweating like hell. I started smiling because I knew, I knew right then, I'd put in so many hours there just couldn't be anybody better than me."

And for a long time he was right. He was all-state at North Providence High in his junior year while leading his team to the Rhode Island Class B state championship. At St. Thomas More school in Colchester, Conn., where he next enrolled to improve his grades, he was the star on a team that won the New England prep school championship. At Providence he made first-team All-America as a senior and guided the Friars to the semifinals of the 1973 NCAA championship. He was voted the Joe Lapchick Award as the best college senior in America and then went off to excel on the U.S. All-Star team that whipped the visiting 1972 Olympic champion Soviet team four games to two. "If we had him," said the Russian coach, "we wouldn't lose any games."

The pros were wild for the little court magician with the Bob Cousy accent and stature, and they bid hard for his services. The ABA offered the most, feeling Ernie could help bring the league respectability and a big network TV contract, but he signed with the Braves for about \$2 million for five years.

The contract was a stunner, at the time one of the largest ever in all sports. And after his first season, Ernie appeared to

be worth the investment. He averaged 15.2 points per game for Buffalo and led the league in assists (8.2 per game) and free-throw percentage (90.2)—the first time anyone had been No. 1 in both those categories since Oscar Robertson in 1964. As a playmaking crowd pleaser, Ernie sparked the Braves to their first winning season ever and their first berth in the NBA playoffs. He was voted Rookie of the Year for 1973-74.

Ernie D's world seemed bright as he sat by the tennis courts the following summer, as dazzling and charmed as one of his no-look, behind-the-head, cross-court passes. Oh, some critics were grumbling that he couldn't play big-time defense—a writer in L.A. was the first to come up with the "Ernie No D" moniker—but, after all, he was only 22, and he would learn. And anyway, nobody since Cousy had dribbled and passed and dealt the ball the way Ernie did.

Now it is 6½ years later, and Ernie D, an NBA reject with nothing better to do, is sitting at the end of the press table at the Providence Civic Center, watching the Providence basketball team warm up for a game against the University of Massachusetts. He is wearing corduroys, a pullover shirt and white high-top basketball shoes. His jet-black hair is brushed straight back in the style popularized by John Travolta during his disco phase.

This is where Ernie sits for all the Providence home games. He continued



gets in free; all the ushers and guards and school officials know him and let him by with a nod or a handshake. For the last year or so, Ernie has spent a lot of time on the Providence campus, most of it in the old gym at Alumni Hall, his "home away from home," where he plays pickup games with friends or shoots alone. Several years ago the Providence athletic department gave him his own key to the gym.

A ball rolls across the floor toward the table. Ernie leaps out of his chair and grabs it. From the aisle he fires a two-handed set shot that arcs off the Providence rim. "Hey, that was close!" he shouts. He smiles, but without irony. He isn't joking. The shot, he wants you to know, was close. Another ball rolls toward the table but is intercepted by a Providence player. "Can I get a shot?" Ernie pleads, arms extended. "Can I?"

Seeing who it is, the player walks over and hands Ernie the ball. He launches another 90-footer, which bungs off the rim and bounces over the backboard. "Ooh, almost!" he cries, slapping his hands together.

As the stands slowly fill, people stop to shake his hand or ask him for an autograph. Providence is a working-class town with a large Italian population, and Ernie, the oldest son of a North Providence carpenter of Italian descent, is a hero. Providence is O.K. by him, too. As a high school senior he was recruited by a number of major colleges but went on just one recruiting trip—to Providence College. "It was always P.C. or nothing," he says.

The fans show respect as they slide up, but some look a bit confused. After all, what's Ernie doing here? Isn't this the middle of the NBA season? Is it possible that he really did retire after his final, sad partial season with the Celtics in 1978? But then hadn't he talked about re-signing with the Celtics just last year? And when that fell through, wasn't he offered a deal with the San Diego Clippers for this season? Didn't he say in the papers how excited he was about this new chance, that he was going to play like a kid again? Didn't he fly out to San Diego in September with his wife and three daughters and rent a condo for nine months, but for some reason never show up for a single day of practice? Was Ernie D., the man Cousy once called "pound for pound the best basketball player in America," ever going to play ball again?

In fact, though healthy and apparently enthusiastic, Ernie hasn't worn a pro uniform in 2½ seasons. Instead, he has stayed around Providence, shooting hoops and drinking beer with his buddies, watching his children grow, collecting \$50,000 yearly paychecks from his original contract with the Braves, not working, doing nothing in particular. He played ball last June with some other New England players against the 1980 U.S. Olympic basketball team and performed well—27 points in one game, seven assists in another—but he's been unable or unwilling to work a deal with the pros.

"Sure, I could have tried out with the Celtics in '79 as a free agent," Ernie says. "But



Ernie coaches CYD ball, offering tips to tots

I wanted a no-cut contract, and they wouldn't give me one. They had other guys on no-cuts, guys I'd be competing with, so I knew I wasn't getting a fair chance and I stayed home. With San Diego this year, I knew I couldn't get a no-cut, and I understood. I've been out of the game a while; I have no bargaining power. They offered me around \$70,000 and I thought about it when I was out there and I said, 'Look, if I'm not good enough to make the team, cut me and I'll go home. But if I am, pay me something.' I wasn't asking for the average salary, which is around \$180,000, but something in the \$130,000-\$140,000 range. Paul Silas, the coach, had seen me work out, and he knew what I could do. He could have raised the price, but he didn't."

"So now people are saying, 'Here's Ernie D., the fat cat, quitting because of money.' What they don't know is that if I'd been making minimum wage, I would have quit pro ball a long time ago. But I was making a bundle, so I never missed practice. I hustled and worked as hard as I could. I love basketball. There's nothing I like more or can do better. My heart aches when I'm not playing. But for me to play now, it's got to be worth my while. I'm a simple kid and maybe I'm immature, but I've learned a few things."

Dave Gavitt, his former coach at Providence and now the school's athletic di-



With Buffalo, Ernie had a big season in the bags in 1974

rector and commissioner of the Big East Conference, is one of Ernie's closest advisers, but he isn't sure exactly what it is Ernie has learned. "His actions befuddle me," Gavitt says. "An intense love of basketball has been at the root of everything he's ever done. He gets in shape, he acts like he wants to play, but then he gets caught up in extraneous things—money, contracts—things that have never been that important to him. Both Larry Fleisher, his agent, and I told him he was crazy for not giving Boston a try and for not playing with San Diego. I think the wounds of Buffalo are deeper than any of us realize."

Others at Providence are less tactful. "To tell you the truth, Ernie's become a pain in the butt," says Rich Lewis, Providence's sports information director. "He's always hanging around, looking like a whipped dog. When you see him all the time, after a while you don't even feel sorry for him. He won't listen to anybody, and if he won't help himself, what can you do?"

Ernie leaves the game early in the second half. The contest is dull and he's bored. He gets into his Blazer and drives through Providence to his house in nearby Lincoln, a house his father built for him in 1973 for over a quarter-million dollars.

"You know how a lot of people, even grown-ups, don't know what they want to be in life?" Ernie says. "Well, I was very lucky. I knew when I was only 12 years old. The only problem is that now I'm 29, and I don't know anymore what I want to be."

It's a brisk December afternoon, and Ernie has brought a writer to see the outdoor court at Stephen Olney Grammar School, the altar for his childhood basketball devotions. The earflaps on his hat are down, and as he walks across the pavement they make him look like a big, plump-checked kid. If the neighbors were out, they'd wave at the familiar sight.

From 12 to 17, the critical years in a player's development, Ernie probably

played more basketball on this court than anyone of similar age played on any other court anywhere in the world. He kept charts of his daily performances, checking off the categories as he went along: "100 full-court drives, 100 jumpers off the left dribble, 100 jumpers off the right dribble, 100 spin fakes, 100 drive hooks." On a good day he could get in more than 2,000 shots, run maybe 10 miles. But he was never bored. "I always pretended that I was Jimmy Walker [an All-American guard for Providence in the mid-'60s] and that someone was guarding me. I was always Jimmy Walker in a close game with time running out."

The court has changed in minor ways since Ernie's youth; the asphalt is buckling more, the backboards have been spray-painted lime green and pink. There is nothing to stop an errant shot from rolling down the hill, past the school, across the street and then down another hill and off toward downtown Providence. Nothing, that is, except huddling feet. The court seems a bleak, congested

These days Ernie D's playmaking skills are on display only in pickup games with old cronies like former teammate Kevin Stacon, who is guarding him here



place for a young man to have spent so much time alone.

"I didn't mind playing alone," Ernie says. "I was a fanatic. That's the reason I chose basketball, because it's one sport you can practice alone."

Ernie practiced alone, and even in games he was somewhere else, in his own zone. In the first few minutes of Providence's 1973 NCAA semifinal game against Memphis State, Ernie threw two passes that showed how imaginative he could be. One pass went half-court on the fly, through a crowd, to Marvin Barnes for a layup; the other traveled three-quarters the length of the court on the fly, between two lunging defenders, to Kevin Staum for a layup. Both passes were thrown while Ernie was guarded and looking away from his teammates, and both were thrown behind the back.

Somehow, Ernie's problems now are tied up with that single-mindedness of purpose, that devotion to an element of play and the belief that if things like the free throw and the layup can be perfected, life itself will be whipped into line. "Ernie's confidence on court has made his life very simple," says Mike Tranchese, the Providence sports information director when Ernie was a senior and now the assistant commissioner of the Big East Conference. "It has caused him to see things as black and white, with no gray areas in between. And that's one of his big problems—our society is all shades of gray."

"I know this," Ernie says now, leaving his playground. "If they give me the ball, just guarantee me I'll have it, I can make things happen on an NBA court."

What happened suddenly and crushingly in his second year with the Braves was that they decided not to give him the ball. The ostensible reason was the early-season knee surgery he required for torn cartilage. But he came back quickly from the operation, and though Coach Jack Ramsay said Ernie wasn't ready yet to direct the team, he knew he was. "How can you get ready unless you play?" Ernie asks. "But I didn't say anything then.

People wouldn't have liked hearing me complain. Even now, nobody needs to hear my problems. They've got enough of their own."

So Ernie moved to the end of the bench, and even when his knee was obviously rehabilitated, he seldom played. There was a game in Chicago in 1976, a rout by the Bulls in which Ramsay played everyone except Ernie. The crowd began chanting, "We want Ernie!" as the minutes ticked away, aware that something odd was happening between coach and player. Ramsay ignored the chants. Ernie smiled, looked down at his shoes, hung his head.

What Ramsay had decided was that Ernie's offensive skills didn't compensate

jumpers or four-foot jumpers. If I was in shape, I could have had a pretty big scoring night." The next day the "No D" handle first appeared in print.

For the young man who had known only hard work and glory, who said he was going to build a full-size gym next to his house, with a wooden floor, glass backboards, showers, all of it, this was something new and ugly. Buffalo fans booed him. What right did he have to be sitting on the bench earning \$1,600 more per game than Braves Center Bob McAdoo? In February, Ernie's gold Continental with the license plate *ERNIE D* was stolen from in front of his parents' house in Providence and found a few miles away with its interior burning.



DeGregorio and Staum look back to the good old days while mugging over a few mugs in a Newport watering hole.

for his defensive liabilities. And if Ernie couldn't be out there handling the ball all the time, the reasoning continued, there was very little need for him to play at all.

At times, it was true, Ernie's defense had made some mediocre guards look like scoring machines. And then there was that game, early in his rookie year, when Jerry West had eaten Ernie alive, scoring 35 points in 32 minutes on an injured foot. "They had DeGregorio on me most of the night, and I was able to go pretty much wherever I wanted," the usually reserved West said after the game. "I could get 12-foot jumpers, 10-foot

Buffalo coaches came and went. Occasionally they would experiment and let Ernie start, but in time they always put him back on the bench. Finally, in September of 1977 new Braves President John Y. Brown dealt Ernie to the Lakers. There were unfortunate overtones to the deal, which had been arranged by Lakers owner Jack Kent Cooke without the approval of the new L.A. coach, Jerry West. The man who had humiliated Ernie four years earlier expressed his feelings about it by not appearing at the press conference announcing Ernie's arrival in town.

The Lakers cut Ernie at midseason,

and Boston picked him up. The move by the Celtics was a friendly gesture—Boston is only 60 miles from Providence, and Ernie had always said he wanted to play in Celtic green. But he didn't play. He sat. For the 1977-78 season, his last, his stats read 3.9 points and 2.6 assists per game and just 66 minutes played.

Ernie says he's never been bitter about his NBA career, but he was; he still is. He changes his phone number every few months to keep away pestering reporters, and at times now he'll even admit that he thinks he was made a "scapegoat" by coaches with bad records. NBA people say he could still play in the league—for certain teams, under certain conditions. Ernie himself talks of intangibles: of needing to feel a team's "commitment" first, of a "proper situation," of "fair compensation," of being "appreciated for my efforts."

"That's what upsets me about the San Diego thing," says Fleisher. "Ernie knew what the contract was before he went out there, and he said everything was fine. He's always told me he doesn't want to be somebody's 11th man and just put in time, and I don't blame him for that. But in San Diego he could have made a big contribution, and he knew it. I don't know what he wants."

"Minutes," says Ernie. "John Havlicek once told me that minutes played is the most important statistic of all. I need minutes to show what I can do."

To some observers, such as Celtics General Manager Red Auerbach, there is only one reason Ernie isn't in the NBA. "I don't think he's hungry anymore," says Auerbach. "I love Ernie. He's a personable New England kid with a lot of charisma. But I don't buy that stuff about him wanting to play ball more than anything in the world. I think that great contract he signed with Buffalo was a detriment to him as a ballplayer. Jeez, we needed him this year. But how much can you chase him? He wants guarantees. You gotta ask yourself, 'Does Ernie D want to play the price anymore?'"

Ernie may not need the money, but he needs the sense of self-worth that acceptance in the NBA would bring him. He's bored doing nothing with his life. He speaks in a desultory way about wanting to coach at Providence someday, or maybe working with kids. He'd never been involved in business until recently, when he became a partner in a North

Providence bar and renamed it Ernie D's. At the Providence-Massachusetts game he got a couple of children to distribute advertising cards to the audience.

"The lease is only for four months," he said, almost apologetically. "I'd rather play ball." In fact, the bar was open only a few days before the two partners had a disagreement and Ernie pulled out.

And yet Ernie himself feels ambivalence about renewing his basketball career, because of his very real desire to remain near his family. "A lot of guys give you that mom and apple-pie business," says Stacom, Ernie's teammate in college and on the Celtics. "But Ernie means it. He's always hated the pro life-style."

A true homebody, Ernie always flew back to Providence from Buffalo anytime the Braves had a day off. At his prep school, special rules were made while he was there so he could go home with his parents on weekends. And now that his oldest daughter has entered grade school, Ernie drops her off and picks her up each day. "Nobody knows how much I love my family," he says.

EErnie has opened the Alumni Hall gym early this Sunday morning so he and a group of friends can play ball. These are his old pals from North Providence, school teachers, salesmen, laborers, drinking buddies. They aren't good basketball players. They're here just to get some exercise, to socialize, to shake off the remnants of Saturday night.

"You know what a Boston newspaper guy wrote a while ago?" Ernie asks an out-of-town guest who has tagged along to play in the game. "I hope Ernie D is content playing ball with his cronies at P.C." I mean, isn't that something, calling these guys "cronies?" Ernie dribbles the ball as he removes his winter coat. "What's a 'crony,' anyway?"

Ernie puts on a T-shirt with a picture of his two oldest daughters emblazoned on the chest and sets up his radio at the far end of the gym. "Isn't this floor great?" he says. "Isn't the water in that fountain good?"

This is Ernie's element—the gym, the ball, the tunes, the hoop, the gang, the game. But, of course, he could get along with nothing but the ball if he had to. Terry Leary, one of his oldest friends, recalls the Sunday a few months ago when Ernie called him at 6:45 a.m. and

yelled, "Let's play ball!" "I told him I thought he was still in San Diego," says Terry. "But he said, 'I quit their NBA. I'm back in my other NBA.'"

The first game to 50 baskets goes under way, and Ernie's team quickly surges ahead. Ernie plays as hard as he can, throwing impossible passes to startled teammates, scoring 40 baskets himself, running circles around his exhausted opponents. There's no way he can play a game of basketball indifferently.

In the second game Ernie's man beats him for a layup and Ernie cries in mock chagrin, "Uh-oh, they're gonna say I can't play defense!" And the fact is, he can't play it very well. He doesn't have the tools for it, or perhaps the inclination. It may be that it's impossible to learn defense by yourself.

During a break Ernie sits on the floor, bouncing the ball between his knees. "I haven't told anyone this," he says. "But I think the only team I'd play for in the NBA is Chicago. They've got trees in the front line. I could get those guys the ball, and even if I can't play defense, if somebody gets around me, where are they going to go when they run into those big horses?" Ernie holds the ball and stares at its seams. "But I know Red Thorn, the Chicago GM, doesn't want me. It was in the paper. He thinks I'm too slow. I'm probably dreaming. I probably won't play ball again."

Ernie bounces the ball quietly for a time. When asked about his best moments in the NBA, he says there were two. One was getting 25 assists in a game at Portland his rookie year, and the other was playing in John Havlicek's last game at the Boston Garden in 1978. Ernie didn't play much on that occasion, but when he did get in, he did nothing but feed Havlicek, getting three straight assists.

"The noise during that whole game was unbelievable," says Ernie. "So emotional. I had tears in my eyes before I even came out of the locker room. When they finally took John out, everything was so high. I was so happy for him I wasn't even thinking that it was probably my last game, too."

Ernie starts playing again now, and he is as intense and skillful as ever. Somehow it doesn't seem right that this is how it should end for him, Ernie D playing ball with his cronies in a drafty gym in front of no one.



The top competitors from 19 countries found Florida's new pool record-ready

Bettering the 'bests'

The world's best all-round woman swimmer stood on the starting block at the United States Swimming International in Gainesville, Fla. last week. She was Tracy Caulkins, of Nashville, the U.S.A. Or, if you please, Petra Schneider of the German Democratic Republic. The 400-meter individual medley, the ultimate combination of endurance and versatility, was about to begin, butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle—that's where the "all-round" comes in. The "best" was equally obvious. Caulkins, winner of 27 national championships, one of the world's great

butterflies and breaststrokers, until recently had held world records in both the 200 and 400 IM.

But Schneider broke both marks last May, then bettered the 400 again to win the gold medal in Moscow in July. The Olympic silver medalist finished a full 10 seconds back, but she wasn't Caulkins, of course, nor any other U.S. swimmer. That's why this Caulkins-Schneider race—the whole meet, in fact—was more than just another international get-together. Though the latter of the Olympics may have been missing, many of the stars who performed at Moscow were at Gainesville. The Russians, for example.

To the surprise of many, the full Soviet national swimming team was there to compete against the G.D.R. and the U.S. for the first time since the 1978 world championships. Swimmers from 16 other nations were entered as well, including a delegation from the People's Republic of China—six swimmers and a coach. No Chinese team had previously competed against either the U.S.S.R. or the G.D.R.

On hand were 15 of the 22 swimming

Sippy Woodhead, one of many Americans to make a big splash at Gainesville, took the 200 free

gold medalists from Moscow. Naturally, there were those who saw the meet as a second Olympics. But most of those were Americans. The two other great swimming powers saw it differently. East German Coach Wolfgang Richter said, "The high point of our season will be the European championships in September." And Soviet Coach Sergei Vaitsekhovsky put it this way, "This is not an important competition for us. We have not prepared for it. It's just a chance to meet American swimmers once again. The boycott was not their decision, and we do not want to go four more years before competing with them."

But wasn't the meet an opportunity to compare the Soviet Olympic champions with the best Americans?

"No," Vaitsekhovsky said. "We have our gold medals. We do not defend them here. There is an old Russian saying: 'After the fight we do not shake a list.'"

Based on what took place at the international, it was hard to know how serious Richter and Vaitsekhovsky were. Great swimming times require strong competition, and so many records fell at Gainesville that a sigh could be heard from the grandstand whenever an event failed to produce one. The pool was 25 meters long, so world records, which can be set only in 50-meter pools, couldn't be broken, but 25-meter world best times were fair game, and when the three-day meet had ended 19 of them had fallen. Caulkins, in her first major backstroke competition, broke one in the 100. Then she did the same in the 200 IM. In the men's 100 backstroke, New York high school senior Rick Carey lowered the record by .29 seconds, and Auburn graduate David McCagg broke the 50 free mark, though he was second to another record breaker, the G.D.R.'s Jorg Wouthe.

In the men's 800-meter freestyle, the mark of 7:56.65 was trimmed by more than four seconds by Leningrad's Aleksandr Chayev, the 1980 silver medalist in the 1,500, and by the G.D.R.'s Rai-

ner Strohbach a split second back. Pretty fair performances for two "unprepared" swimmers.

But the Americans really dominated the International, taking 19 of the 34 events and setting 11 world bests. Carley, who started swimming at the age of six when his brother threw him into a pool (he sank to the bottom), shaved .2 of a second from his own world best mark in the 200 backstroke. And Craig Beardsley of Harrington Park, N.J., just turned 20, bettered the world best time in the 200 butterfly, by 1.04 seconds. In third place was the U.S.S.R.'s Sergei Fesenko, the 1980 gold medalist in the same event. "It's early in the season," Beardsley had been saying. "I'm not feeling any pressure." Fesenko, who likes to read Jack London novels, claimed to have swum not a stroke all last fall.

In a preliminary heat of the women's 100 breaststroke, Caulkins broke her own record by .32 seconds. In the finals she broke her new record by more than twice that margin. In seventh place was China's Liang Wei Fen, who had won the event at the Hawaii International Invitational in August. But after Liang's seventh, no other Chinese swimmer even made a final for the rest of the meet.

An hour after the 100 breaststroke finals Caulkins was ready for the 200 butterfly. Her main competition was Louisville's Mary T. Meagher, who at 16 had already established the seven fastest times ever in that event, all swum in a 50-meter pool. At Gainesville someone mentioned that record to Mary T. "Seven? Oh, really?" she said, seemingly less than enthusiastic. A friend of Meagher's confided, "The boycott hit her really hard. Of all the U.S. swimmers, I think she was the most devastated by it."

"I thought of retiring," Meagher said. "But I decided to cut my training in half for the next two years, and then get back into it." Then she sidled down to the pool and took 3.45 seconds off the world best 200 record. As Meagher touched she glimpsed a splash in the next lane. It was Caulkins, 1.59 seconds slower, but also a record-breaker. In third place was the G.D.R.'s Ines Gettler, the 200 fly gold medalist in Moscow.

Among the proudest men in Gainesville on this day was Mark Schubert, the 32-year-old U.S. coach, and coach at Mission Viejo, Calif. since 1972. After the 200 butterfly, he held court on the subject, explaining how advanced and

unnatural a stroke the butterfly is, and on the phenomenon called Mary T. as Meagher is known. "I've watched her since she was 11," Schubert said, "and..." He just shook his head. "She always had an inordinate amount of speed. In recent years she's done a lot of endurance training, and endurance on top of speed is an unusual combination in the 200 fly. When the others fade out at 100 meters she keeps on going. And she's not awed by history. Times don't worry her. Mary T. was breaking records and she didn't even know what they were."

"And then there's Tracy, a big girl, long arms and legs, and very flexible. What's so incredible is that she has the best feel for the water of anyone I've ever seen. It's kind of a kinetic sense. She's a dedicated athlete, too. Lots of kids achieve success through hard work. But when there's the kind of talent Tracy has, well, it's no wonder she's unstoppable."

Meanwhile, in the grandstand, the Soviet contingent seemed to be enjoying itself. A few friendly American swimmers had learned a bit of colloquial Russian, pronounced "*Knee pookha knee pira*" (accent on the last syllable). It means "Break a leg," and, as in this country, it is spoken to wish a performer good luck. The Americans were happy with their

Russian phrase, and always in return they would get a quick smile from a departing swimmer and the exclamation "*Ka chortoo*," which means, with equally benign purpose, "Go to hell."

Even Coach Vaitsekhovsky seemed content. He said, "Is easy to breathe in here." In fact, many swimmers and coaches were attributing the extraordinary

continued



Told to "break a leg," Russia's Salnikov cracked the 400 free in the 200 butterfly. Mary T. edged Caulkins and the G.D.R.'s Carol Merschuck





The radiant Caulkins entered six individual events, made six bests

nary times, at least in part, to the smooth water of the Gainesville pool, a part of the University of Florida's new \$12 million Stephen C. O'Connell Center. The pool bottom slopes rapidly from five to 18 feet, greatly reducing the rebound of waves from the bottom. The extensive gutter system is designed to absorb any water that slaps against the pool's sides, so there are no waves to rebound there, either. And three plastic dividers separate the lanes, instead of the usual one or two, so no swimmer can create waves for any other swimmer.

The roof over the pool, a vast expanse of white fiber-glass material coated with Teflon, looks from the outside like a great tufted meringue. It was cheaper to construct than a conventional roof, and it lets a lot of light in, but to keep it up the structure requires a slightly higher air pressure than normally found inside a building. So the air flow is unusual for a building interior, resulting in very low humidity in the pool area, and wafting away most of the chlorine fumes before they can bother the swimmers.

Caulkins' father, Tom, a stroke judge, approved the new pool, but felt that it wasn't the only reason for the numerous records. "This is a very big and interesting field for our kids," he said, "and I think there's a certain amount of extra adrenaline flowing because of it."

Early in the second day of competition the Soviets trotted out their best swimmer. At 20, Vladimir Salnikov holds

the world record in the 400 free and 1,500 as well as the gold medals at Moscow in the 400 free and 1,500. His record time in the latter is 14:58.27, the first below 15 minutes. After the Olympics Salnikov rested, he says, "for 50 days," listening to recordings of Bach, Vivaldi and Tchaikovsky. By December, however, Salnikov was back in the water swimming four hours a day, and at Gainesville he set a world best in the 400 free.

Now Caulkins came back for the 100 fly. In the preliminaries, she approached the finish in slightly under the American-record time, an expert at poolside had shouted, "Tracy, don't breathe." She missed the record by less than a third of a second, and the expert explained, "She breathed twice going into the wall. You can't do that in the butterfly. If she'd kept her head down she could've broken the record."

That evening, in the 100 fly finals, she would again go up against Meagher. Only 30 minutes later, she would face the ultimate test, Schneider and the 400 IM.

That afternoon Tom Caulkins spoke of what lay ahead for his daughter. "She'll have two tough races," he said, "but she wouldn't see any sense in racing if she was a sure winner."

"In the butterfly preliminary today her last turn was poor. She came up half a stroke short. She couldn't decide whether to kick or to take another stroke, but she can't afford to do that tonight. Of course, she's swimming against the best butterflyer the world has ever known. That doesn't mean Mary T can't be beaten, but it will take a super effort."

"As for the 400 IM, it should be a good race. It's a strategic event. It all depends on who makes the best plan. We should know at the end of the backstroke, halfway through the medley, who'll win. Schneider has to be well ahead then to win."

In the 100 fly Meagher and Caulkins were in Lanes 4 and 5 at the center of the pool. Meagher got off to a poor start, and Caulkins led into the third lap. But Meagher came on to shatter the world

best mark, and a stroke later Caulkins also finished under the world best.

Then it was time for the Caulkins-Schneider race. "The classic matchup of the entire meet," according to Randy Hart, the U.S. team's publicity man. The day before, Caulkins had been asked, "Do you think you're the best all-round swimmer in the world?"

"Well," she said, "I'm looking forward to swimming against Petra."

Schneider, even more evasive when asked the same question, replied through her interpreter, "This is not a special competition. It is a preparatory meet for the European Championships."

"But are you the best?"

Schneider seemed embarrassed. The interpreter said, "She says she does not feel that she is the best. She says she is just like any other swimmer."

Now Schneider stood on the block in Lane 4. Caulkins was in Lane 5, Poland's Agnieszka Ciopek in Lane 6. "Go, U.S.A.!" came a chorus from the grandstand. Caulkins led at the start, with Schneider close behind, and by the third lap that hadn't changed. Out of the second backstroke turn, at 150 meters, Caulkins led by two feet, and into the breaststroke sequence she held on. At the last breaststroke turn Caulkins led by nearly a body length, and as the freestyle laps began her lead was a full length. Such leads have been overcome in 100 meters of freestyle swimming. But now the lead was a length and a half. Schneider's record was 4:37.33. Caulkins touched, and the digital clock for her lane stopped at 4:33.44. Schneider's time was 4:35.61, the second best 400 IM ever. She had trailed at 200 meters by less than .2 of a second, but Caulkins had beaten her in the breaststroke by more than two seconds.

Minutes later Canada's 16-year-old Alex Baumann won the men's 400 IM in 4:15.11, 2.70 seconds under the old mark. "There goes the next great swimmer," one official said. But Caulkins, who, by the end of the meet had entered six individual events and bettered world marks in all of them, had the crowd watching her. In the press room a TV man asked her, "If someone said to you now, 'Are you the best all-round swimmer in the world?' what would you do?"

"I'd be humble," she said, blushing.

"Tracy," he said, "are you the best?"

She looked at the floor, then looked up, grinning.

"Yup," she said.

END

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When George Steinbrenner took over the New York Yankees in January of 1973, he said, "I won't be active in the day-to-day operations of the club at all. I can't spread myself too thin. I've got enough headaches with my shipbuilding company." Almost eight years later, on Dec. 4, 1980, on the patio of the VIP lounge at Tampa Bay Downs in Oldsmar, Fla., Steinbrenner stood somewhat removed from a large group of celebrities, including Pitcher Tommy John, former football coaches Lou Saban and Ray Graves, broadcaster Phil Rizzuto and the nation's most prominent thoroughbred breeder, Brownell Combs of Lexington, Ky., and said, "No, I will not be involved in the day-to-day operation of Tampa Bay Downs. With the Yankees and The American Ship Building Company, I just have too much to do. I can't spread myself too thin."

But it seems that Steinbrenner is very elastic, finding time to indulge in any number of whims and fancies, including a little-publicized passion for washing cars. His most recent undertaking had its genesis last March when he bought a major interest in aging Florida Downs for an undisclosed price. Surely it was millions; the plant is situated on 508 acres, the largest tract of land surrounding any U.S. racetrack. One of the first things Steinbrenner did was rename the place Tampa Bay Downs—the track is not far from Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater on Florida's booming west coast, an area rivaling San Diego, Phoenix and Houston in population growth. Steinbrenner also came up with a motto for the racetrack, IT'S A WHOLE NEW BALL GAME, and dressed his mutual clerks in Yankee blue and white.

Now, says Steinbrenner, he hopes to make Tampa Bay Downs "the best little racetrack in the country, give it a feeling of being somewhat like a country fair. I believe that the Tampa area may well be the sleeping giant of sports in the near future. I live here, American Ship Building is here and I have a hotel here [Bay Harbor Inn]."

On opening day at George's new place, sky divers dropped from planes, a jazz

band played and models paraded in a fashion show. More important, for the first time in the track's troubled history, a race was run for a purse of \$10,000. The event, the Bay Harbor Inn Inauguration Stakes, was won by Cherokee Frolic, one of the nation's top 2-year-old fillies, who beat a field of colts. The crowd was amazed by the refurbished racetrack. In just eight months Steinbrenner has pumped some \$3 million into it, a phenomenal amount for a racing association that had concluded its 1979-80 meeting of 82 days with an average daily attendance officially announced as 4,200 (it was probably even lower) and a betting handle of a paltry \$365,000 per program—figures comparable with those for Cahokia Downs in East St. Louis, Ill. or Delta Downs near Lake Charles, La.

Tampa Bay Downs has had a check-

Tampa Bay Downs also suffers from a bish track image, one that wasn't improved by an embarrassing discovery made shortly before the track opened under Steinbrenner. New measurements revealed that for years the furlong poles had been in the wrong places, so that the times of all the thousands of races run there were incorrect. Steinbrenner has had the poles properly placed.

And he has done much more. A year ago the track distributed just \$41,000 in added money during its entire meeting; this year the figure will be \$275,000, a six-fold increase. On March 21, for example, the track will offer the \$50,000 Budweiser-Tampa Bay Derby for continued

George Steinbrenner now stars in a new showcase, but the scenario is familiar

Top banana at Tampa Bay

ered post. In 1926 the track—then called Tampa Downs—collapsed after only a year of operation under the combined weight of apathy and corruption. Twenty-one years later, during the winter of 1947, it reopened as Sunshine Park, though many referred to the place as "Shoeshine Park" because that was what one needed after struggling through the mud and dust of the parking fields. It wasn't unknown for horses at Sunshine to leap over alligators as they made their way around the one-mile oval, and dead-bly cottonmouths were among the denizens of the ramshackle backstretch. Sunshine Park had many owners over the years, many who regretted owning it. While racing prospered on Florida's east coast, it floundered on the west coast, where scandals were commonplace.

Not until 1977 did the track—renamed Florida Downs in 1965—ever show a profit. Today it still struggles to overcome its obscure location on a two-lane road, which makes arriving and departing difficult, and the lure of both dog racing and jai alai in the Tampa area.



The boss swaps horse tales with breeder Combs

Kentucky Derby-bound 3-year-olds, and because the race falls right between the Florida and Flamingo derbies, Tampa Bay Downs is guaranteed an excellent and important field of runners, as well as national attention. For several years many racetracks have tried with little success to acquire sponsorship for races. In a few short months Steinbrenner has chalked up Budweiser, Pepsi-Cola, the Chrysler Corporation and the Florida Breeders' Sales Co. as co-sponsors. How? "Picked up the phone," George says.

Steinbrenner isn't a newcomer to thoroughbred racing. Since 1969 he has owned Kinsman Stud Farm, an 880-acre spread in Ocala, where three excellent

"They never complain. They can't talk to sportswriters and tell them what a bum the owner is. Yes, I've heard all that stuff about racing being crooked. I believe that racing policies itself better than any other sport. A lot of bad stuff in other professional sports never sees the light of day because it is covered up."

Whatever Steinbrenner does usually ends up in controversy, and his newest venture is no exception. On opening day the programs were late in arriving at the track, so Steinbrenner promptly fired his general manager, Eddie McKinsey. Of course, with George it's sometimes hard to tell the difference between a firing and a resignation.



Misadventure: down at the paddock, life goes on much as usual for the Tampa Bay Downs regulars.

sires stand: Groshawk, Steve's Friend and Mr. Justice. Groshawk's fee is \$10,000 per service, one of the highest in Florida, while Steve's Friend costs \$2,000 and Mr. Justice is by invitation only, meaning George will name a price.

Although Steinbrenner has been in the horse business for just over a decade, he has had remarkable success, winning the Illinois and Hollywood Park derbies, the Hialeah Turf Cup and the Century Handicap at Hollywood Park, the Debutante at Churchill Downs and the Lafayette Stakes at Keeneland. He has also had a Kentucky Derby starter (Steve's Friend, who finished fifth in 1977) and a remarkable old gelding named Big Whippend, who won more than \$400,000.

"Horses are great," Steinbrenner says.

McKinsey had been recruited by Steinbrenner only last May from Hialeah where he was the general manager. When he arrived at Tampa Bay, McKinsey persuaded his longtime associate, Rick Sanders, to join him as general superintendent. "I'd never been to the track before," McKinsey says, "and we started on 60 major projects to make it a better place." A major project usually entails the spending of between \$10,000 and \$250,000, and rarely does a racetrack take on more than three such large-scale operations in a season.

More than 1,100 stalls were renovated at Tampa Bay, the tote board was enlarged, plants, shrubs and a waterfall were put in, two new barns with 75 stalls each were constructed, the clubhouse

was refurbished, box seat areas added, new seats put in, a new track kitchen built, roads paved and resurfaced. "George would stop by from time to time and tell Rick and me what a great job we were doing," McKinsey says. "He said he was going to put us under contract, but the contracts were never forthcoming. Just before Thanksgiving, Rick Sanders came down with cancer and had to go into a Houston hospital. George didn't think things were going fast enough and he started pushing even harder. We worked incredible hours, and he would scream at me in front of other people, 'I'll send your ass back to Hialeah!'"

McKinsey's stepson was responsible for printing the programs, a job he had done for 2½ years at Hialeah, Gulfstream, Calder and Pompano. Unfortunately, the night before the track opened, the presses that printed the programs broke down. "I took the blame," says McKinsey. "I told George it was inexcusable, but that there was nothing we could do to control a press breakdown. I went out on Race Track Road and waited for the programs to arrive." Ultimately they got to the track just after the first race.

McKinsey was in his office when Steinbrenner came in with Sam Davis, a former owner and general manager of the track. "From now on," McKinsey recalls Steinbrenner saying, "Sam will tell you when to jump and how high."

McKinsey offered his resignation but he attended the meeting that was held at the end of opening day to go over what had gone wrong. "I volunteered an opinion at the meeting," he says, "and George said, 'I don't want to hear your opinions.' I told him nobody could stop me from giving an opinion in a free society. He stood up and we were very close together. He said, 'If you were a little bigger I'd punch you out.' I said, 'You don't have the heart to punch me out.' I resigned and he gave me a check for \$19,000 and said, 'This is the least I can do.' He never even said, 'Good luck in whatever you do.' I had given my blood to the man and my loyalty. He tried to dehumanize me. Even if the programs hadn't been the problem, something else would have been."

Between now and the end of March, Tampa Bay Downs will be a fascinating operation to watch. With George Steinbrenner at the reins, there may be as much excitement in the management offices as down on the track.

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Entering this season, the big question wasn't whether Louisville was going to have another terrific team—that was taken for granted—but whether Forward Derek Smith could come up with a new hand slap as good as the "high five" he had popularized during the Cardinals' march to the 1980 NCAA title. Before the opening game against DePaul, Smith revealed that he had a new slap almost ready. "It's sort of a front slap, followed by a side slap," Smith said. "We ain't got the timing on it yet."

As of last weekend, the only slaps much in evidence around the Louisville players were the ones being taken at them by the press, rival players and, yes, even their own fans. A desultory 64-47 loss to Kansas State in Manhattan, Kans. last Saturday night dropped Louisville's record all the way to 2-7, the worst start ever for a defending NCAA champion and almost unbelievable for an outfit with four starters and six of the top seven players back from a 33-3 team. Even Smith, ordinarily the squad's most fun-loving player, was upset.

"It's saddening," he said after the Kansas State loss, the Cards' second blowout defeat of the week. "The five who start for us are as good as any five in the nation, but we're having trouble getting up for anybody. We only get up when we absolutely have to."

The best example of this occurred when the Cardinals bombed a good Maryland team 78-67 in their first home game after three straight losses on the road. The second occurred when they destroyed poor Southern California in Los Angeles 79-50 last week in the consolation game of the Winston Tire Classic. That also ended a three-game losing streak, which included Louisville's first back-to-back defeats at Freedom Hall since 1963-64, at the hands of Utah (78-59) and Minnesota (62-56), and North Carolina (86-64) in the Winston Tire opener. The Cards were so bad in the loss to Utah that some of their fans even booed as they left the floor. After the Minnesota game Smith admitted that, for the first time in his career, he

The champs are chumps

Louisville is off to the worst start of any defending NCAA champion in history

had decided to start avoiding the public.

"I been staying in my room a lot more," he said. "You get tired of seeing it from your fans. You know, that look that people give you. And you get tired of hearing the same questions all the time: 'What's wrong with the team?' And 'When are you guys going to get it together?' We're trying. Believe me, we're trying."

It took the Cardinals a while to do even that much, however, and that's part of the reason they're in the mess they are today. Soon after preseason practice began, Coach Denny Crum detected a certain laziness in his players that hadn't existed last season. He responded by working them harder than usual, but the Cardinals merely scowled and called him "Bobby Knight," or worse, behind his back.

Wiley Brown, the massive 6' 8" center, conceded he was "only 75%" in shape when it came time for the opener against DePaul, and 6' 9" redshirt Scooter McCray said that he was having trouble adapting to the guard position vacated by the star of last season's team, Darrell Griffith, who's now playing for the Utah Jazz. Beyond that, there really didn't seem much cause for

concern. Scooter's little brother, 6' 7" Forward Rodney McCray, seemed determined to show everyone that he had deserved more playing time on the U.S. Olympic team. The coaches all were saying that playmaking Guard Jerry Eaves would be the most improved player in the Metro Conference. And there seemed to be plenty of reserve strength in last season's supersubs, Roger Burkman and Poncho Wright, and a couple of promising freshmen from Mississippi. Forward Charles Jones and Guard Lancaster (Flash) Gordon.

Crum knew how hard it was to defend an NCAA championship, having helped John Wooden defend a few as an assistant coach at UCLA, and he knew how difficult it is to replace a player who did as much as Griffith did last year, but

continued



Kansas State's Randy Reed blocks a shot by the Cardinals' Jones

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try as he might, he couldn't get the message across to his players. After the loss to DePaul and the shockers at Tulsa and Oklahoma State, the Cards began working harder, but now they were playing catch-up ball, under pressure.

For a fleeting moment, against Maryland, Louisville looked as if it had rediscovered the magic and finally exorcized the ghost of Griffith. But that was only an illusion and, in the losses since, the Cardinals have again become a confused team plagued by lack of leadership, shooting and confidence. Whereas Griffith averaged 22.9 points a game last year, only Smith is getting as many as 16.

After the 22-point loss to North Carolina, Crum kept his locker room closed for 42 minutes while he and his players did "a little soul-searching," as he later characterized it. "Last season we really weren't that much better than a lot of the teams we played," Crum said. "The only way we won was by hustling and working hard. But then the players had six or eight months to read their press clippings and they forgot all that. They actually began to believe that we were better than everybody else; and with four starters back, they thought we ought to be better again."

Kansas State was one of those teams from last year that Crum was talking about. Louisville beat the Wildcats in the second round of the 1980 NAAs on a last-second prayer of a shot in overtime by little-used senior Tony Branch. That was precisely the kind of shooting, leadership and, yes, luck that Louisville hasn't had this season.

Going into the Kansas State game, Crum was hopeful that the locker-room session in Los Angeles and the subsequent win over Southern Cal might have put his team on track. Instead, the Cards fell back into what has become a familiar rut. "I felt about five minutes before the game that it just wasn't there again," Smith said.

He was right, too. Once again Louisville got more turnovers than baskets from its guards, with the result that Kansas State's zone looked impregnable. Inside, Rodney McCray and Brown, all 440 pounds of them, got only two rebounds. And Louisville again played its pressing defense with a listlessness that gave Kansas State one easy basket after another. Afterward Crum said, "I don't know what to do."

Short of asking Griffith to disguise

himself and come back for four more years, it's difficult to figure what else Crum can do. He has tried several line-ups unsuccessfully, and now he says, "I don't know if we have any right combination. If we're shooting the ball well, anybody we play will be all right." Of course, shooting is a manifestation of confidence, and confidence—as the team's 44.5% field-goal mark suggests—is what Louisville must rediscover.

As bleak as it appears for the defending champs right now, the Cards may yet be able to show off Smith's new hand slap, or a few of the old high fives, in this year's NCAA tournament. The schedule, a killer so far, eases this week when the team begins conference play. The league doesn't look strong and a victory in the postseason tournament, which will be held in Louisville, would put the Cardinals into the NCAA field. "We can still be good," says Crum, who has won at least 20 games in each of his nine previous years at Louisville.

When Griffith was in town recently he tried to call Smith and other teammates, but couldn't find them. He wanted to say "hang in there." No doubt Derek Smith wishes he could have talked to Griffith. No doubt he wishes even more that Griffith were still around. Somehow, with Griffith, the timing on the hand slaps was always right.

THE WEEK

(Dec. 29-Jan. 4)

by HERM WEISKOPF

WEST While Louisville was losing to North Carolina in the opening game of the Winston Tire Classic, Minnesota was beating the host school, Southern California, 74-67. The Gophers then took the title game 76-60 as their zone defense bottled up the Tar Heels. After leading by four at halftime, Minnesota pulled away from North Carolina by using a motion offense, something it hadn't practiced all season. The strategy worked because of the fine outside shooting of MVP Mark Hall, who popped in 18 of his 23 points after the intermission.

Joining Louisville as early contenders for the FOTY (Flo of the Year) Award were Indiana, a two-time loser, and Texas A&M, which lost three games. After squirming past Rutgers 55-50 in the first round of the Rainbow Classic in Honolulu, the Hoosiers lost to Clemson 58-57 when Chris Dodds sank a jumper with 10 seconds left, and then were

shocked 66-60 by Pan American, which got 21 points from MVP Kenneth Green and 20 from Curtis Glasper. Clemson finished first, thanks to a pair of overtime wins—50-49 over Louisiana Tech and 75-71 over Hawaii. Kevin Magee scored 34 points and Randy Whildon 27 as UC Irvine joined Texas A&M 91-74 in the first round of the KOA Classic in Billings, Mont. The previously unbeaten Aggies were further humiliated in the consolation game by a 39-38 loss to Eastern Montana. The defeat was sealed when Eastern Montana's Calvin Weinberg stole the ball with four seconds to go and made the decisive foul shot three seconds later. A&M started out A-O-K in the KOA for UC Irvine, which defeated Montana 65-63 in overtime for the championship. Magee, who led the nation in scoring with a 30.6 average, had 15 points, 10 rebounds and sank two free throws with :03 left to send the championship game into overtime.

"DePaul plays just as good as it has to in order to beat you," said Georgetown Coach John Thompson after a 72-67 loss to the Blue Demons in the first round of the Cabrillo Classic. "They're like a professional team in that way." The Hoyas lost even though they had a 49-30 rebounding edge, made five more field goals than the Blue Demons and cut a nine-point deficit to four with :51 left. DePaul saved itself with superb foul shooting—32 of 35, including 13 of 15 in the closing minutes. San Diego State, which got a school- and tournament-record 26 rebounds from freshman Forward Michael Cape while trimming LaSalle 93-67, was outclassed in the title game. With Teddy Grubbs scoring 14 of his team's first 18 points in the second half, DePaul ripped to an 85-69 triumph.

Oregon State took the Far West Classic in Portland by breezing past previously unbeaten Rhode Island 103-55 and then stopping Oregon 67-57. Beaver Coach Ralph Miller used his subs so liberally against the Rams that they outscored the regulars 53-50. Oregon slowed down Oregon State's running game in the finale, but the Beavers prevailed as Mark Radford pumped in 20 points. Radford also scored eight clutch points in the late going at Arizona State as Oregon State won its Pac-10 opener 71-67. Washington tried a variety of zones at UCLA, but the Bruins shredded them all in a 96-74 rout.

For the first time in more than seven seasons at Nevada-Las Vegas, Coach Jerry Tarkanian's club dropped two straight home games. First, the Rebels blew a 45-36 half-time lead and lost 76-75 to Utah, which got 26 points from Karl Bankowski. Then came a 92-90 overtime setback by Brigham Young, which got 20 points and 11 rebounds from Steve Trumbo, 24 points and eight rebounds from Fred Roberts and 27 points from Danny Ainge. Danny Vranes scored 22 points as Utah won 74-60 at Air Force, and Ainge got 24 as BYU downed the Falcons 77-65.

continued

MIDWEST As if to prove that its two early-week losses were no flukes, Texas A&M dropped its SWC opener to Texas Christian 56-51 after leading 51-48 with 1:24 left. The Horned Frogs, 3-7 entering the game, got 25 points from Darrell Browder.

North Carolina also spurred at the end, outscoring Kansas 8-1 during the last 1:41. It wasn't enough, though, as the Jayhawks pulled off a 56-55 upset by putting three-quarter-court pressure on the Tar Heel backcourt and using a zone to keep the ball from Carolina's big men.

Kansas State abandoned its zone and went man-for-man while beating Louisville 64-47. The Wildcats even outrebounded the Cardinals 39-24. Ed Neely grabbing 20 missed shots. Three days earlier, Kansas State ended Fresno State's string of victories at 13, 47-39.

Tulsa was upended, too, 97-86 in an MVC contest at Creighton. Kevin McKenna, a senior who switched from forward to guard this season, led the Bluejays with 27 points.

EAST Virginia's Ralph Sampson felt anything but at home in his first college game back at his hometown of Harrisonburg, Va. In addition to being held to a season-low 11 points by a collapsing James Madison defense, Sampson missed five of six foul shots, was guilty of half the Cavaliers' 14 turnovers and drew a technical foul for slamming the ball on the court after being called for goading. Even so, Virginia won—barely—when Lee Raker's jumper with 1:06 provided the game's final points in a 53-52 decision. Sampson continued to have problems against Virginia Tech. But after contributing only four points to the Cavaliers' 26-24 halftime lead, he settled down and wound up with 19 points and 16 rebounds. By winning 64-51, Virginia lengthened its two-season victory streak to 13 games, the longest in the nation.

For the third year in a row the MVP of the Maryland Invitational was Albert King of the Terps. King had 26 points during a 114-89 victory over Marshall in the first round and 20 points and 12 rebounds in a 74-57 tilt—a game defeat of St. Joseph's. William & Mary then gave Maryland a scare, taking advantage of Terp Coach Lefty Driesell's decision to send in three subs with 3:17 left and his team leading 64-51. With eight seconds to go, the margin had dwindled to 67-64. Buck went three Maryland regulars. One of them, Greg Manning, sank two foul shots in the final four seconds to give him 22 points and the Terps a 69-64 win.

Georgia Tech's attempt to run with speedy Wake Forest led to an 87-61 ACC defeat. With Frank Johnson netting 34 points, the Deacons beat Davidson 83-70. Clemson also came out on top in its ACC opener, downing North Carolina State 76-68 as Chris Dodds scored 25 points.

SI TOP 20

1. DePAUL (12-0)	1 *
2. OREGON STATE (9-0)	2
3. UCLA (7-1)	4
4. VIRGINIA (8-0)	3
5. NOTRE DAME (7-1)	5
6. KENTUCKY (8-1)	6
7. MARYLAND (10-1)	7
8. IOWA (8-1)	8
9. LOUISIANA ST. (10-1)	10
10. WAKE FOREST (10-0)	11
11. ILLINOIS (8-1)	14
12. CLEMSON (11-1)	15
13. MICHIGAN (9-0)	16
14. TENNESSEE (9-1)	--
15. BYU (10-2)	18
16. UTAH (11-1)	--
17. MINNESOTA (8-1)	--
18. S. ALABAMA (10-1)	19
19. ARIZONA ST. (8-2)	13
20. N. CAROLINA (9-3)	12

* Last week

With 6'11" Chuck Aleksinas, a transfer from Kentucky, on hand, Connecticut's 6'7" Cornelius Thompson has shifted from center to forward this season. Thompson, the MVP of the Connecticut Midwest Classic, had 20 rebounds, 17 points and five steals as the Huskies beat Western Kentucky 84-58 for the title. Aleksinas then hit 21 points and Thompson 22 as Connecticut stopped Rhode Island 74-69 and improved its record to 7-0, its finest start in 16 years.

MIDEAST "We work on that play in practice, but it really freaked me out when the ball went in," said Tennessee Forward Howard Wood, whose spectacular basket with one second to go forced an overtime period in an SEC game at Alabama. Wood's shot—a 20-foot jumper that knotted the score at 52 all—came after he had leaped to grab an 80-foot rebound pass from Gary Carter and then had jumped up again to fire away. The Vols went on to win 70-69 as freshman Michael Brooks earned eight consecutive free throws in the extra period. Earlier, Tennessee took the Sugar Bowl Tournament as MVP Wood scored 22 points in a 69-53 upset of Arizona State and had 20 points and 17 rebounds in a 90-69 wopout of Duke in the final.

Following a 100-54 triumph over Maine, Kentucky downed Georgia 76-62 in its SEC opener. Fred Cowan, recently recuperated from a badly sprained ankle, led the way against the Bulldogs with 22 points.

"The players thought about watching the game, but I'm sort of glad they went back to the hotel," said St. Francis (Pa.) Coach Dave Magarity. At least back at the hotel the Red

Flash didn't have to watch LSU whip North Carolina-Williamson 100-68. St. Francis fared little better against the Tigers the next day, committing 30 turnovers while losing 91-65. LSU then played its first SEC game of the season at Florida, which had a surprisingly fine 6-2 record. The Tigers took the bite out of the Gators in the second half, using a full-court press to force 16 mistakes and gain a 92-66 win. Howard Carter of LSU finished with 25 points and 15 rebounds.

DePaul, continuing to have trouble getting pumped up against an outmanned opponent, was held to a 31-31 halftime tie by Furman. Early in the second half, however, the Blue Demons turned on the juice, outscoring the Paladins 17-4. When it was over, Mark Aguirre had 27 points and 13 rebounds, and DePaul had a 78-65 victory.

"They don't finesse you. They just run over you." That was Northern Iowa Coach Jim Berry's pregame assessment of Iowa, which matched its way to a 48-28 rebounding advantage and an 86-52 triumph. Next time out, the Hawkeyes beat Wisconsin-Eau Claire 82-62 as seven players scored in double figures for the winners.

By defeating Detroit 85-68 and Northern

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

KEVIN MAGIE: The 6'6" junior center for UC Irvine sank 17 of 23 field-goal attempts, scored 49 points and had 23 rebounds as the Anteaters took the KOA Classic by upsetting Texas A&M and then knocking off Montana.

Michigan 92-56, Michigan ran its record to 9-0, its best start since 1927-28. Mike McGee of the Wolverines had 48 points in those games and teammate David Garner held Detroit's top scorer, Jerry Davis, to six points—14 below his average. Joe Kopsicki, a 6'9", 240-pound forward, led the Titans with 29 points and 18 rebounds. Illinois also reached itself for the start of Big Ten action, rolling past Southern Illinois-Edwardsville 104-68. But Ohio State was still far from sharp, needing two overtimes to come out on top 70-67 against West Virginia, which outrebounded the Buckeyes 35-26.

Earl Jones, District of Columbia's 6'11" center, was also not nearly ready for the big time. In his first game against a Division I team—an 86-84 triple-overtime loss to Western Kentucky—Jones missed 12 of 18 field-goal tries and made eight turnovers. He also missed a free throw with no time remaining at the end of regulation, which would have won the game.

Ed Runt scored 63 points as South Alabama swept to three easy victories. After taking the Senior Bowl Tournament by drubbing Navy 65-47 and Fordham 79-61, the Jaguars poured it on against Mississippi Valley State as they won 98-67.

END

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CZECH TENNIS

continued

The time is the present. The subject is the future. The place is a tennis court somewhere in the world. The cast, part of it, has been on stage since the drama began; in order of appearance: Austin, McEnroe and Jaeger—i.e., the Yanks. Now the second act is under way, and the Czechs have made their entrance. The man is Ivan Lendl of Ostrava, 20 years old, 6' 2" and still filling out. She's Hana Mandlikova of Prague, 18, 5' 8" and just right. He's a baseliner with a forehand that's second only to Bjorn

Borg's and a volley that's better. She's an attacker, a serve-and-volleyer in the mold of her countrywoman, Martina Navratilova, with the athletic grace of Evonne Goolagong. A year ago, unless you were a follower of international junior tennis, you probably hadn't heard of either of them. Today he's the sixth-ranked man in the world and she's the fifth-ranked woman.

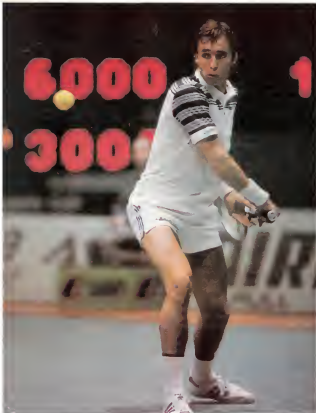
Lendl has beaten Borg twice this past year, and in December he led Czechoslovakia to its first Davis Cup victory, the first Davis Cup ever won by an Eastern-bloc country. Mandlikova has beaten Chris Evert Lloyd once, Navratilova twice and Andre Jaeger three times. The two young Czechs haven't conquered McEnroe, Connors and Austin as yet, but it's only a matter of time, and each has plenty of that.

The question—to be resolved in the third act—is: How long will the old folks of tennis hang around? Borg is 24 now and married. He has won five straight Wimbledons, and last year, according to a conservative but informed estimate, he made between \$6 million and \$7 million. It's possible, even probable, that he'll be running short of motivation before long. He played only 14 tournaments in 1980. Lendl, by contrast, at 20 still very hungry, played 32, plus three Davis Cup rounds.

Evert Lloyd, 26, seems also to be on the brink of change. She regained her No. 1 world ranking in 1980, taking revenge on the upstart Tracy Austin, who'd beaten her three times in 11 days last winter. But having done that and also now being happily married, where does she go next? What can she possibly do for her 11th encore?

Last January, Borg was asked to cite the most promising newcomers in tennis. He named Lendl, Johan Kriek, the expatriate South African, and Yannick Noah of France. Now, a year later, Noah is No. 23, Kriek is No. 18 and Lendl is No. 6. Asked if he was surprised that Lendl had progressed so rapidly, Borg said, "No, absolutely not. I predicted it." In a Grand Prix tournament in Basel, Switzerland

Though only 20, the intense Ivan Lendl, ranked sixth in the world, has beaten Bjorn Borg twice



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TONY DUFFY

last October, Lendl beat Borg in five sets in the final. Afterward Borg said, "Ivan played very, very well. He was steadier than I was at the backcourt."

Steadier than Borg from the backcourt? Can it be?

"You can count on one hand the players who can make points from the backcourt," says Corrado Barazzutti, the No. 2 singles man on the Italian Davis Cup team. "Borg, Connors, Vilas. Now add Lendl to that list. He has such great strength in his strokes, he anticipates so intelligently the reactions of his opponents, that he puts the game at the baseline and keeps it there."

In early October, Lendl launched a winning streak that made all the fluttering predictions seem conservative. In the space of six weeks he won five Volvo Grand Prix tournaments, beating Guillermo Vilas in Barcelona, getting that victory over Borg in Basel and defeating Eliot Teltscher in Tokyo, as well as winning back-to-back tournaments over Brian Tinsley in Taipei and Hong Kong. "At Barcelona I played well," says Adriano Panatta of Italy. "But I was beaten 16-1, 6-11 by Lendl in the semifinal. What do you want me to say? He played perfectly. I had the feeling I was hitting against a wall."

"When I am serving well, I can do anything," Lendl has said. "When I'm not, I get into trouble." The same can be said of his passing shots. If his awesome forehand is at its best and he is serving well, he is unbeatable, as Harold Solomon discovered in the fourth round of the U.S. Open in September. Lendl lost the first game of the first set and that was it. He beat Solomon 6-1, 6-0, 6-0.

Lendl is a prudent, professional player. On the other hand, Mandlikova (pronounced mand-LEEK-o-va in Czechoslovakia, but mand-lee-KO-va in the U.S. by fiat of Hana's advisers here who feel the real pronunciation may be too tough for Americans to handle), lives flamboyantly at the other end of the spectrum, sometimes to her disadvantage. British tennis writer Rex Bellamy continued



Lendl and Davis Cup are hoisted by Team Captains Antonin Boland and Jan Kodet



At 18, the upright, aggressive Hana Mandlikova is No. 5 among women, has enormous potential

CZECH TENNIS

continued

wrote in *World Tennis*, "Mandlikova walks tightropes. Lendl builds bridges." Mandlikova has all the strokes, great speed, agility, natural athleticism. "She has probably the best serve of anyone I've ever played," said Jaeger after losing to her in the final of the Volvo Women's Cup in August. "Virginia Wade and Martina, if it's deuce or close, just try to get the serve in. Hana will go for the ace. Usually, she'll get it."

Hana's record for the last half of 1980 was just as extraordinary as Lendl's. In 14 tournaments, beginning with the WTA Championship at Amelia Island, Fla. in April, when she lost to Navratilova in the final, she won six times, reached the final four other times and the semis three times.

Since June, Mandlikova has traveled the world with veteran Betty Stove as her coach and confidante. Stove, a Wimbledon finalist in singles, doubles and mixed doubles in 1977 and U.S. Open doubles champion with Wendy Turnbull in 1979, is 35 now. Her playing career had reached the point of diminishing returns, and she was considering coaching others when she was approached by Mandlikova. "I don't like to be alone," Mandlikova says. "So I ask her if she will be my coach. I know she is a good person and she understands tennis. Now we can talk about technique before a match and it helps me very much. I am more patient than before. Last year I just hit the ball and see how nice it was."

Stove speaks several languages in addition to her native Dutch, but Czech isn't one of them, so she and Mandlikova communicate in English. "If she wants to talk," says Stove, "she's going to have to know English." Stove also sits in on the press conferences that become more frequent as a player grows more successful. She helps out with an English word here and there, and she comes to Mandlikova's aid when the questions begin getting sticky, as when a young Dutch reporter blurted out, "What do you do with your money?" When Mandlikova looked startled at the tactlessness of the question, Stove grinned and said, "Most of it she gives to me." When the reporter persisted, Stove threw the question back at him. "What do you do with your money? Put it in a bank, right?"

A favorite question has to do with deflection, a very delicate subject in Czechoslovakian tennis circles. "Are you angry

with Martina for defecting? Would you do it, too?" the Dutch reporter asked. Stove left this question to Mandlikova to answer, but she watched her face closely for a sign, an SOS perhaps.

"That is Martina's decision," Mandlikova answered smoothly. "Why do I have to be angry? It is her life. Would I do it? No. I have no reason." End of press conference.

"She has been very down to earth," says Stove, "but everything came so quickly. Now she's at a temporary halt. She hasn't beaten Tracy, and she has beaten Chris only once. She doesn't have the consistency yet to be No. 1. She's above Jaeger right now; she has better strokes. The question is: where will they be in five years? It's a learning process. You can have every stroke, but you have to use the right one at the right time."

Mandlikova, says Stove, "listens to music all day like any 18-year-old," but she's also in a much lonelier position than most 18-year-olds will ever know. She has risen out of the pack but still hasn't reached the top. While she pursues those above her, she must also fight off those who are nipping at her heels. Her world

of airports and hotels and tennis courts is populated with adversaries, and that is where Stove comes in. They talk about tennis and about life; they take their meals together; they play casino and dominoes; they watch the matches of other players; they sometimes play doubles together; and they practice.

In preparation before Mandlikova's match last November against lefthander Barbara Potter in Amsterdam, Stove enlisted a top-ranked Dutch player, Theo Gorter, who's also a lefthander. After 45 minutes of hitting with Gorter and returning his powerful serve, a wide V of sweat had appeared on Mandlikova's back, reaching from her shoulders almost to the waist of her warmup pants. A faded green cotton bandana, worn Apache style, held her brown bangs in place; the red one that has

become her trademark, the lucky one she bought at the Orange Bowl Juniors two years ago, she saves for real matches. At one point Gorter hit a blazer down the backhand line. Mandlikova lunged at the ball, missed, slipped, fell and lay prone, forehead on the court, her rib cage quaking with silent laughter. Stove was not amused. Later, when Mandlikova missed overhead, Stove shouted, "That's the one." Mandlikova shook her head, smiling. "Bad lights, bad lights," she shouted back. "No!" roared Stove.

"We're not like Tracy and her mother," says Stove. "They're always separate from the rest. Hana goes out with the other kids when she feels like it. But she knows her duties in regard to eating and sleeping and hours. She wants to win. It's funny to see the change in the other players. They watch her matches now to see what she does different than they do."

Lendl, by contrast, is a loner. He travels without a coach or a companion. Often his only company is a Japanese-made pocket cassette player with earphones. He makes his own travel and hotel arrangements and rents a car wherever he goes, and he knows what he's

Now on military duty, Lendl wears uniform in a Prague snowfall.





Martina Navratilova shares a light moment on court with her coach and confidante, the veteran Betty Stove.

talking about when he discusses his business affairs with his advisers. His only good friend on the tour is Wojtek Fibak, the 28-year-old Pole with whom he sometimes plays doubles. During the Davis Cup final in Prague in December, when Lendl, the expectations of 15 million Czechs on his young shoulders, was trying to maintain his concentration, Fibak came to town for a few days to practice with him and to help lighten the pressure. Fibak's silver Porsche, parked every day just outside the players' entrance to Prague's Sportovní Hala, was almost as great an attraction as Lendl, there being fewer Porsches in Prague than up-and-coming tennis players.

"For me it is difficult to play in Czechoslovakia," said Lendl after the Davis Cup was settled, 4-1 in favor of the

Czechs, after he had beaten Barazzutti and Panatta in singles and teamed with Tomas Smid, the No. 2 Czech, to defeat Panatta and Paolo Bertolucci in the doubles. "All the people know I am No. 6 in the world and that Barazzutti is No. 21, and they expect me to beat him easily, 1, 1 and 1, and I cannot do it. I want to play my best and I cannot. It's nice that people like you and cheer for you, but it is more and more difficult."

Lendl's schedule seems suicidal. John McEnroe said earlier this year, "He's a good player, a very good player, but he plays too much. He's crazy." Lendl told a British journalist, "I know I can't go on like this," after he'd beaten Borg in Basel, then flown directly to Tokyo and played the first match of the Japan Open fewer than 24 hours later. "But I thought it

would be good for my game. I need experience, and you don't get that by sitting on your backside in Prague."

Money isn't what drives Lendl to the next airport and the next country and the next opponent. He earned approximately half a million dollars last year and will probably make \$2 million or more a year from now on. Eventually he may be the richest man in Czechoslovakia, but as he points out, "Once you have enough money to pay for the air tickets, winning titles becomes more important. It's the satisfaction of doing something no one else can do."

Pavel Korda, coach of the Czech Davis Cup team since 1970 and of Czechoslovakia's 1973 Wimbledon champion, Jan Kodes, for 16 years, agrees with Lendl's approach. "If you want to stay great, you keep at it," he says. "No holidays. I can tell you that Kodes had his first holiday with his family at the age of 32."

While everyone outside Czechoslovakia wonders why a tiny country (about the size of Louisiana) should be producing top-drawer tennis players with such amazing frequency, everyone inside Czechoslovakia has a theory to explain the phenomenon.

"We have a tradition of good tennis players," Kodes says. "We have a good history and good examples."

The Czech tennis tradition is hundreds of years older than the Czech nation. The Czechoslovakian Republic was stitched together out of bits and pieces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918, but tennis existed there in medieval times at the courts of the nobility, just as it did in England, France and elsewhere. Hardly had Major Walter Wingfield devised the modern or "lawn" version of tennis in England in 1874 than the Czechs were following suit. The first modern Czech competition was held in 1879, two years after the inaugural tournament at Wimbledon.

Karel Kozeluh (1895-1950) was the first great Czech player. He was a professional bill boy as a child and a celebrated teacher of the game by the age of 14. He was a professional and therefore ineligible for the great amateur tournaments of the 1920s and 1930s, but he was recognized as one of the very best players, amateur or professional, in the world. Jaroslav Drobný emerged soon after World War II and re- continued

CZECH TENNIS

continued

ained among the world's top players for more than a decade, reaching the final at Wimbledon twice before winning in 1954 at the age of 32. Vera Sukova was the first Czech woman to make her mark abroad when she played in the Wimbledon final in 1962; Kodes became a Czech national hero in 1973 when he won at Wimbledon and attained the final at Forest Hills; Navratilova, with two Wimbledon wins, is the most successful Czech player to date, but she, like Drobny, who defected in 1949, achieved non-person status in her homeland when she departed in 1973.

Korda, the Davis Cup coach, concedes that tradition is significant, and he also curtails politely, and wisely, in the direction of the state and the various sports federations, but he quickly gets down to what he considers the grit—motivation. The No. 1 motivational force, he says,

has been the success of Kodes, Navratilova, Renata Tomanova, Regina Maršíková, Mandlíková and Lendl. "They're heroes for children. Now in new housing estates in the summer you see little children imitating Lendl and Mandlíková and Kodes. Another very strong motivation is the desire to see the world with the help of tennis. We're a cultural nation. Our children know a lot about what's going on outside Czechoslovakia. In Australia I found people who hardly knew where Europe was. But our children know the world and they want to see it." And there is the money. "If you play very well you earn a lot of money. Everybody in this society knows that these people [tennis players] make lots of money, but people agree that it's right."

Such was not always the case. Lendl and Mandlíková are the beneficiaries of

a new governmental leniency. Since the permanent departure of Navratilova to the U.S. and the subsequent defection to Switzerland of another player, Hana Strachanová, the Czechoslovak Tennis Federation has adopted a modified hands-off policy. Now players can keep 80% of what they earn, returning only 20% to the government as a form of tax and paying a relatively small sum, \$3,000 or \$4,000 a year, to the tennis federation for the education of new talent. Furthermore, they are free to come and go very much as they like. The approval of the federation, though still required, is now more or less automatic. And finally, the federation, having observed that harassment leads to frustration, which leads to defection, which leads to public embarrassment, now averts its bureaucratic eyes even when the racket head of a bright young product of Czech socialism suddenly blooms with the insignia of a giant of American capitalism. As long as the young entrepreneurs remain tactful in their public pronouncements and discreet in their financial dealings, and as long as they come home a few times a year to compete on national teams for Davis and Federation and other such cups, they are free to be as rich as the promoters in the U.S. and elsewhere can make them.

Drobny, observing the Czech tennis scene from London, says, "You have a choice. A job in a factory or the privileges given recognized sportsmen. Because of the Czechoslovakian



Lendl's mother, Olga, was the No. 2 women player in Czechoslovakia. His father, Jiri, was among the top men.

T.J. SPARTA CKO PRAHA
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Mendilove's father, Vlastislav, an Olympic sprinter, once turned the family dining room into a practice "court."



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CZECH TENNIS

continued

political situation, to achieve a high standard of living you either become a good sportsman or an artist, such as a singer or actor. And it's only these people, apart from the Communist leaders themselves, who are able to achieve a standard of living substantially better than normal people. People like doctors and engineers, people like that, they don't make much. They all earn standard wages. But when young people see someone like Kodes—by Czechoslovakian standards, he now lives like a king—they want to improve their lives, too. Thousands of Czechoslovakian children want to be a Kodes. They dream of winning Wimbledon the moment they're presented with their first tennis racket."

Mandlikova's first racket was a wooden paddle made for her by her father, Vilem Mandlik, who was a sprinter on the Czechoslovak track team at the Melbourne and Rome Olympics. Mandlik, a fit 45, was trained as a lawyer, but he works as a sports journalist for the Czech army newspaper in Prague. He has the same occasionally mischievous sense of humor that sets his daughter apart from most of her fellows and delights the crowds who watch her play.

Mandlik believes that Czechs are naturally disposed toward tennis. "We're always good at games that require coordi-

ination of movements and thought," he says. "Ice hockey, soccer and tennis require not just power but quick wits." Aside from that, he attributes Czech tennis success to good coaches, good basic techniques and "fanatic parents," such as himself, who are willing to travel from town to town every week all summer long, delivering their offspring to one or another of dozens of tournaments run for children by the tennis federation. "Nowhere during my travels have I seen things for children so well organized as here," he says.

At the heart of the Czech system are the 650 sports clubs scattered throughout the country. Mandlik enrolled Hans at Sparta in Prague, one of the largest and most famous clubs in the country, when she was nine years old. Lendl was taken by his tennis-playing parents to their club, NHHK Ostrava, when he was only three. Of Czechoslovakia's 70,000 tennis players, 50,000 belong to one or another of the 650 clubs. Through the clubs, 30,000 Czechs from the age of eight to 70 and more compete regularly in tournaments run by the federation.

"Some clubs are very small," says Kodes, who played at Sparta, "but that's where everything begins. There's some old coach in every club who teaches kids the grip and how to hit against a wall.

basic things. They may not be the best coaches, but they start you off. Then, when you begin to get good, the system is well organized."

The major clubs, like Sparta and Slavia and Dukla Praha, the Army club, support as many as 15 or 20 sports, and inter-club competition in such games as soccer and ice hockey are followed closely by fans and press. In large cities the important clubs have sponsoring industries. The NHHK in NHHK Ostrava, for instance, stands for, in translation, Klement Gottwald New Foundry, which makes trucks, trams and railroad cars. The Sparta club's sponsor is CKD Praha, a manufacturer of locomotives, transformers and compressors.

The clubs provide enough tennis courts to meet everyone's needs in the warm half of the year. But there are only 40 indoor courts in the country, and 20 of them serve a split function—tennis and basketball most often. With a winter that begins in earnest in November and doesn't let up until April, the indoor court time available for even the most talented players is extremely limited. Children under the age of 12, no matter who they are, rarely have more than an hour a week allotted them in the winter, and strictly recreational players have no rights at all except when no one else is around. The top players have top priority: first the national teams, then the first-division teams, then the promising children, then the other children and adults who play in tournaments and then, and only then, plain old weekend players. In other words, a prime motive for being good and getting better is the chance to play more tennis, especially during the winter.

"The lack of indoor courts is a situation we must improve," says tennis federation president Cyril Suk, a big rumpled man with enormous feet, a noble nose and a bristling gray crew cut. "Tennis is so popular there aren't enough courts. In 1974 we had 34 tournaments for children from 10 to 18. For the last few years we've had 150."

Clearly, physical facilities aren't the hinge on which the Czech system swings. Sparta, the club from which the careers of Mandlikova, Kodes, Navratilova and Renata Tomanova were launched and perhaps the most celebrated tennis factory in the world these days, looks, under an inch or two of snow, like a

continued



Mandlikova honed her game at Prague's Sparta club, here lying bleakly under a blanket of snow

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CZECH TENNIS

continued

fallow track garden. Its 14 unadorned red-clay courts are located on a nameless and only recently paved two-lane road at the edge of a grim industrial section of Prague. The grounds, three acres perhaps, are surrounded by a metal fence topped with a strand or two of barbed wire. Here and there a vine has volunteered to climb the fence, softening the surroundings slightly, and a few bare trees that look as if they might be willows grow alongside the outbuildings. Until recently, when a new two-story, utilitarian red-brick building was constructed to house locker rooms, offices, a cafeteria and, most important, the club's one indoor court, the only structures on the premises were four small dilapidated frame cottages that once upon a time were painted green. The smallest cottage, which looks as if it might once have been a hen house, was briefly the home of the Mandlik family a few years ago. "Hana was 13 then," says her father, "and she wanted more time to play, so my wife and I worked additionally at the club and lived there."

Across the road from Sparta is the equally unprepossessing Red Star club. A soot-stained bubble containing an indoor court dominates the premises, which include a wooden fence and a jumble of buildings of indeterminate age and function. Red Star is the club for which Lendl will play for the next two years while he is performing his compulsory military service. He conspicuously wore an army uniform during the week of the Davis Cup final whenever he faced the press or a television camera. The uniform was obviously only for show, because the jacket was several sizes too large for his bony frame and the trousers hadn't yet been tailored.

Lendl's military tour is expected to interfere little, if at all, with his tennis schedule. Apparently there is a Czech equivalent of U.S. Army Special Services. As one Prague said, "The uniform will be put on a shelf at the Red Star club and there it will remain for two years." And then he added, "But I did not say it."

The Czech tennis federation is particularly proud of a relatively recent refinement of its system—a network of training centers for especially gifted young players scattered across the country. The centers are housed in existing clubs and are actually more a state of mind than a phys-

ical facility. While a player is associated with a center, he gets coaching, increased court time, equipment and housing nearby if his home is in another town. Twenty-two such centers have been set up for players from 11 to 16. Six others, located in the major cities—Prague, Pilsen, Brno, Prešov, Ostrava and Bratislava—accommodate approximately 60 top players from ages 16 to 20 under the supervision of professional coaches.

Kodes drew a diagram of the system on a paper napkin during the Davis Cup final: the schools and clubs feed the training centers; the 22 centers for 11-to-16-year-olds feed the six for 16-to-20-year-olds; and the 16-to-20 centers feed the national teams, junior and senior.

A system that is not only successful but can also be diagrammed on a paper napkin obviously is based on clear thinking. However, the most striking characteristic of the Czech tennis program, considering the rigid political system in which it exists, is its emphasis on the individual. "It is up to the parents and the child to decide whether the child pursues tennis," says Kodes. "They're not obliged to be tennis players. Not like East Germany. We work on a completely different basis."

A clue to that basis may be the humane note that crops up in the words of Czech tennis people. Vera Sukova, the coach of the national women's team for 15 years, says of the young players, "It is very important not to make mistakes at this level. Each age is different. They must be treated individually." Jiri Lendl, Ivan's father, says, "Without trainers of juniors who are nice people, for whom working with youth is work of the heart, it would be impossible to get such results and such success." Vilem Mandlik says, "My own father was a hard person. He never said, 'You're great.' I discovered it was good to act the opposite, to say, 'You're great, you can be the best in the world,' to always support her, not to press her down."

Another clue may lie in the fact that every topflight Czech tennis player is also skilled at other games. Building healthy mental and physical balance seems to be inherent in the system. Lifelong specialization of the sort that has produced top American players such as Austin and Connors and Evert Lloyd is unknown in Czechoslovakia. Korda says, "I don't know a tennis player who is

not able to play soccer. Lendl is terrific at both soccer and basketball. Hana can play soccer like a boy, with both feet. This is a very important part of the Czech method, to play another kind of ball game." Navratilova played soccer in Revnice, the town near Prague where she grew up. Marsikova was the third-ranked figure skater in the country. Sukova played basketball until a broken left arm turned her to tennis instead. Kodes played more soccer than tennis as a child and continued to play center forward on the Czech tennis players' team after he'd become an international tennis star. Drobny was a member of the Czech Olympic hockey team that won the silver medal at the St. Moritz Winter Olympics of 1948. Kozeluh also played soccer for Sparta Praha and scored the decisive goal in the ice hockey match that made Czechoslovakia European champion in 1924.

Tomas Dvorak, a burly, sleepy-eyed 46-year-old blond who heads the tennis program at Sparta, became Mandlikova's coach when she was 12. From the beginning he knew that she would be good. "She had perfect basic strokes and fast legs and a very good temperament for individual sport," he says. "She'd be very good at any individual sport."

If you ask Dvorak why the Czech system is productive, he smiles and says, "Everybody is wondering." Then he adds, "In fact, it's all due to fanatics and fools able to hit a million balls. You can't teach tennis sitting at a table. And, of course, the help of the parents."

Navratilova agrees: "All of us—Marsikova, Tomanova, Mandlikova, Lendl, me—had tennis-playing parents. My father taught me all but three years, from nine to 12, when I had a coach. I beat him first when I was 15."

Navratilova's parents played tennis three or four times a week at Slavov, a club in Revnice with four clay courts and a wall. They took Martina with them when they went there, and, using a racket that had belonged to her grandmother, she would hit against the wall. She initially set foot on a court when she was seven. "When I first played in the 12-and-unders there would be only five or 10 of us in a tournament," she says. "We had to play round robin. I would play the same kids 10 times a year."

continued

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continued

At 16 Navratilova began to play for Sparta. By that time Mandlikova was 10 years old and one of dozens of children enrolled in Sparta's tennis school. Tomanova played for Sparta then, too, but it was Navratilova who was Mandlikova's heroine. She copied Navratilova's aggressive style of play, and when Martina took part in an interclub tournament Hana insisted on being her ball girl.

Mandlikova had been at Sparta for only a year at that time, but she and her older brother, now a first-division hockey player, had been playing the game with their father for some time. "He never pushed me to play tennis," says Mandlikova. "He said, 'Go play and have fun,' not 'You will practice two hours a day.' I think it is very important that parents are not pushing you all the time. In the beginning I didn't like tennis very much. I preferred to have fun with the girls and boys, but when I got older I began to like tennis."

Vilem Mandlik may not have been pushing tennis at his daughter, but he was certainly making it available. When she was still quite young and, like everyone else her age, entitled to only two hours of court time a week, he transformed the family dining room into a kind of indoor tennis court. "We moved all the furniture out and painted a circle on the wall," he says, somewhat sheepishly. "That is why Hana now must play everything in front of her." Did the neighbors complain? "I am choleric. Maybe they were afraid to complain."

"My father made everything a game," says Mandlikova. "Once we were on holiday on the beach in Bugaria, and we volleyed for money, two leva [a little less than \$2]. I think I remember that it was very hot and that I won and that I bought ice cream."

Mandlik fills in the details: "We went by car and lived in a tent near the beach. Hana and her brother were very young, and they wanted to play on the beach and go swimming. I wanted her to play tennis, so I proposed that we volley for half a lev. I consciously played badly to prolong the game." Then he smiles, mock-mournfully. "Those were the last beautiful holidays. Then tennis came and it was all over."

Lendl grew up in Ostrava, an industrial city of 320,000 near the Polish border, 170 miles east of Prague. Ostrava is the Manchester, the Pittsburgh, the Es-

sen of Czechoslovakia. It's sometimes called the Black City. "There is so much smoke," says Lendl, "that if a good wind is blowing you cannot play. Or, you can play, but you cannot breathe. And it smells so bad."

His father, Jiri, 56, a lawyer, and his mother, Olga, 45, a secretary, were and are very good tennis players. Olga was once ranked No. 2 nationally in women's singles, and she's still a good doubles player. When Jiri was younger, he was among the top 15 or 20 in singles. Jiri and Olga played every day during the outdoor season, and they took Ivan along with them to NHKG Ostrava when he was only three. Ivan literally cannot remember when he first played tennis. He does know that he began with a paddle and a ball against a wall.

"There was no swimming pool at Ostrava, just tennis courts, and nothing else to do," says Lendl, "but it was always fun. If I started feeling it was work during practice, I just stopped."

When school was out Lendl hung around the tennis courts every day until dark and played whoever showed up. When he had no one to play with he played against a wall. "I did not like to, but I had to," he says. "I did not like it because I could not beat the wall."

Winning mattered a great deal to Lendl for as long as he can remember. "I never played many sets with my mother because she was still competing at that time," he says. "But I played with my father every week. I measured myself against him. I had to beat him first." Lendl also battled his father in a table soccer game, a competition that predated their tennis matches but was no less intense. "He didn't like to be defeated in anything," says Jiri. "After a loss he starts to work very hard."

While Ivan's mother and father were his first teachers, Oldrich Lerch, whom Jiri describes as "a very experienced old coach" at NHKG Ostrava, soon took over. "He was a good person to begin with," says Ivan. "He taught me I have to jump on the ball, hit it on the top, not let it drop, to move on the ball. I think that is why I am able to hit the ball so hard."

Lendl played his first tournament match when he was eight and lost 6-0, 6-1. "I behaved so bad when I was los-

ing," he recalls. "No matter who I lost to, mother or father, anyone. Terrible. TERR-ible! In the soccer game with my father I was suspended a couple of times when I threw things. He would say, 'If you do not behave nicely we will not play for a week.' So we do not play for a week, because I lost."

As he talks of his youthful misdeeds, Lendl's bony face, which is completely void of animation or humor when he plays or discusses tennis, suddenly breaks apart in a big, toothy, homely, lovable grin. After Lendl attains a few more of his goals and has learned to enjoy the world around him a bit more, that grin will appear more often. It's going to make him a lot of friends.

No one can recall exactly when Lendl finally beat his father in a table-soccer match, but he was 13 when he took him at tennis. At 14 he beat his mother. At 17 or 18, he says, he finally learned to control his temper. Now, Borg says, "I have a high regard for Lendl as a human being. He is not a braggart or an extrovert like Nastase or Guentalis. He is a sportsman and a gentleman on the court and beyond."

The world is going to become much more familiar with this sportsman and gentleman in the next few years. Korda thinks Lendl will win the U.S. Open this year. In any case, the hard-hitting rivalry developing between Lendl and McEnroe will surely be the most interesting story in men's tennis for several years to come.

Mandlikova's development may take a little longer, but she, too, is learning to harness her talent, to be patient, to make the right choices on the court. Her daring style of play is a welcome alternative to the conservative baseline games of Evert Lloyd, Austin and Jaeger, and her personality, on and off court, provides a bright spot of color wherever she goes. As for the supporting cast back home, "the fools and fanatics" who created the environment in which Lendl and Mandlikova grew, the people for whom tennis is "a work of the heart," the parents who share their sport with their children, who paint circles on the dining-room wall, who make sure the game is always fun, in them lies the real secret of the Czech success. Harsh winters, scarce facilities and limited funds are obstacles of small consequence against a spirit such as theirs. **END**



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FOR THE RECORD

A roundup of the week Dec. 29-Jan. 4

Compiled by CRAIG NEFF

PRO BASKETBALL—The most startling statistic in Golden State's 121-106 victory over Boston was not Bernard King's 30 points in 27 minutes on the court, but Larry Bird's two points in 27 minutes. Bird's first score came in all 274 of his college and pro games—he was 0 for 9 from the field against the defense of Larry Smith and Purvis Shortt—also marked the end of a 12-game Celtics winning streak that had pulled Boston to within two games of the Atlantic Division leading 76ers. Philly had never lost against the Warriors, winning 179-105 by making 83.9% of its shots, but also suffered consecutive losses for the first time this season. Los Angeles beat the 76ers 127-106 behind Kawena Eduloh's 34 points and James Worthy's 31, and Portland edged Philly 109-104 on Billy Ray Bates' last-second layup. The only division leader to have a satisfactory good week was the Milwaukee Star Guardians, which won 3-0. Mark O'Donnell's basket at the buzzer gave the Spurs a 109-101 win over Seattle, and James Valters 11 points in the final minutes with the Lakers 118-112. A 103-101 victory over Chicago, which ended a seven-game Bulls win streak, left San Antonio with a 19-game lead over seventh-place Houston, which had a better week itself. The Rockets headed San Diego on first time in seven games, 104-86, beat Utah 117-101 and defeated Dallas 124-120. Calvin Murphy scored 34 against the Mavericks and 42 more in a 134-132 loss to Denver, while Moses Malone had 73 points and 31 rebounds in those two games. Cleveland's Mike Mitchell poured in 44 points in the Cavs' win over Dallas 115-100. New Jersey (111-100) and Washington (122-112) hit team highs, remained in fifth place in the Central Division 1401 games behind Milwaukee's Phoenix, the Pacific Division leaders, blew a 13-point halftime edge in losing 109-97 to the Celtics and was able to beat Denver 133-132 only when the Nuggets' Dennis Thompson was called for goaltending in the closing minute. The SuperSonics' first win showed up in Phoenix for their game with the Suns after a tie at Sea-Tac Airport near Seattle frustrated them. The Suns might have hoped for such weather-winded under new Coach Bob MacKinnon, they ran their losing streak to seven games and had four injured starters.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL—Georgia finished its season unbeaten and undefeated by defeating Notre Dame 27-10 in the Sugar Bowl (page 16). Michigan won 20-17 over Washington, Alabama defeated Baylor 30-10 in the Cotton Bowl, Oklahoma edged Florida State 18-17 in the Orange Bowl, North Carolina defeated Texas 16-7 in the Bluebonnet Bowl, Pittsburgh won the Gar-

ret Bowl 37-9 over South Carolina, and Miami beat Virginia Tech 29-16 in the Peach Bowl.

PRO FOOTBALL—In the AFC semifinal playoffs, San Diego beat Buffalo 20-14 and Oakland defeated Cleveland 14-12, while Philadelphia won over the Vikings 31-16 and Dallas upended Atlanta 30-21 in NFC games.

HOCKEY—Montreal vaulted from eighth place to fifth by winning four in a row, while St. Louis moved ahead of the Flyers into second place with a 3-0 week. After the Canadiens blasted the Rangers 5-2 by scoring on three of their four second-period shots, Montreal Coach Rick Bowness said that on Los Angeles 4-0 on only his fourth NHL start. The Canadiens then ran their unbeaten streak to six, by defeating Hartford 3-1 and Chicago 3-1, and moved past the Capitals, Sabres and North Stars in the standings. St. Louis, meanwhile, squandered its string of non-losing games to seven with 3-2 and 4-3 wins over Vancouver and a 3-3 tie against over Toronto. Wayne Gretzky scored a hat trick on the victory over the Leafs, which was played before the Blues' largest home crowd since April 1975. With 55 points, St. Louis finished itself behind only the Islanders (54), and ahead of Philly (53), L.A. (52) and Montreal (48). Falling to third place wasn't the only humiliation suffered by the Flyers, they also lost 4-3 to last-place Winnipeg, Philadelphia (16-3) to Minnesota when the North Stars scored four goals on power plays. A pair of power play goals by Dave Maloney helped the Rangers to a 3-1 win over the Islanders, who otherwise were themselves outperforming. They blasted Colorado 9-3 on Coach George's hot stick and beat Hartford 8-1, but by Mike Ryan's 7th and last goal in the series. The Whalers' Mike Rogers saw his power-scoring streak end at 18 games in that loss. Having started off slowly, Calgary continued to climb in the standings, reaching eighth place after a 5-3 victory over Edmonton and a 7-6 win over the Kings. With Phil Hui had those goals against the Oilers and two more in the game with Los Angeles, which the Flyers won 6-3, the Flyers' score was 25 goals left. Detroit, too, had a strong week, beating the Jets 4-3 and the Penguins 3-1 and tying Vancouver 2-2. But the Red Wings' best individual performance, Kent Lundin's best, came in a 6-1 loss to Pittsburgh.

HORSE RACING—DYNASTY 199,261, 8th Showman at, beat heavily favored Bold 19, 1st Deceased by a mile in the \$54,250 La Brea Stakes for 4-year-old fillies at Santa Anita. Birling's seven victories in 1975.

TENNIS—BRIAN TEACHER defeated Kim Warwick 7-5, 7-6, 6-3 in the final of the Australian Men's Open in Melbourne.

MILEPOSTS—TIRED: Three days after his team's 27-7 loss to Oakland in the AFC playoffs, Houston Oilers Coach Bum Phillips, 57, in six seasons under Phillips, the Oilers were 53-33 inside the playoffs three times (1970-84) and reached the AFC championship game twice (1970-84). Phillips' defensive coordinator since 1974, was named the team's new head coach.

FIRED—As Auburn football coach, PAT DYE, 41, who coached in Wyoming coach after a 6-6 season. He left town to head at East Carolina (1974-79) and Wyoming (1980) in 84-23-1.

As Texas Tech football coach, JERRY MOORE, 41, who coached at two schools at North Texas State (1976-80) was 11-11.

PLACED ON PROBATION—By the NCAA, the Arizona State football program, which violated a variety of eligibility, recruiting and racial-discrimination rules between 1975 and 1979. The Sun Devils will be ineligible for bowl games next season and NCAA-controlled telecasts for two seasons.

DIED—Former basketball coach BRUCE HALE, 62, who had 19 winning seasons at the University of Miami (1941 between 1954 and 1966, and a 22-56 mark at one season (1967-68) with the Oakland Oaks of the ABA, of a heart attack in Orem, Calif.

Former middleweight champion (1959-60) CEFERINO GARCIA, 74, as a result of lung cancer, at San Diego.

MALCOLM ROSE, 74, master of the Indianapolis 500 in 1941, 1947 and 1948 of an apparent heart attack in Royal Oak, Mich.

Former A's (1913-15) and Yankees (1915-27) Pitcher BOB SHAWKEY, 90, a four-time 20-game winner who was New York's mascot in the first game ever played in Yankee Stadium, which he won 4-1 over the Red Sox in Syracuse, N.Y. A right-hander, he pitched in the World Series and had a 195-180 lifetime record.

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19TH HOLE THE READERS TAKE OVER

Edited by GAY FLOOD

HERBIES, ETC.

Sir:

Reading E.M. Swift's article on SI's Sportsman of the Year (A Reminder of What We Can Be, Dec. 22-29) brought tears to my eyes. However, my tears were shed for all the high school, Junior, Pee Wee and Midget hockey players who will now be subjected to a plethora of "Herbies" and forced to endure cruel and harsh treatment from coaches who share Herb Brooks' perspective on winning. I submit that the U.S. hockey team would have achieved even greater heights without the handicap of having to cope with Brooks' coaching philosophy. Does Brooks' coaching strategy truly epitomize the American spirit? I say emphatically no!

STUART ABRAMS
West Hartford, Conn.

Sir:

Much of what you purport to deplore in amateur athletics could be remedied more easily if SPORTS ILLUSTRATED and others stopped expressing boundless admiration for overbearing jerks like U.S. Olympic Hockey Coach Herb Brooks.

A. PETER HOLLES
Wilson, N.C.

Sir:

My compliments to E.M. Swift on his brilliant article on the U.S. Olympic hockey team. I also know the meaning of "Herbies" and sympathize with the players. As one who has played youth hockey in Massachusetts, I can attest to the sheer brutality of doing Herbies early Saturday and Sunday mornings after a particularly galling loss the preceding night. One Saturday morning, when the temperature was hovering around five degrees below zero, we repeatedly did Herbies—or leg killers, as we called them—until we almost died of exhaustion. And this was the start of practice. At the conclusion, we did another six. Needless to say, this woke us up and we hammered the opposition the next night.

SCOTT SACKLER
La Grange, Ga.

Sir:

Hats off to Herb Brooks and to Minnesota Viking Coach Bud Grant (When the Dust Cleared, It Was Minnesota, Dec. 22-29). I can't think of many things more inspirational in sports than the way these two have shown how the underdog is never out of it. Perhaps Brooks and Grant can be faulted for their methodologies, their aloofness and their in-

dividuality—but they know how to take young men whom “knowledgeable” sports scribes write off and do the impossible with them. If that’s not what coaching is all about, then tell me what is.

BOB VANSTREUM
Dellwood, Minn.

BEST TOWN

Sir:

Bob McMahon’s analysis of the best and worst sports towns (SCORECARD, Dec. 15) is extremely misleading. How dare he suggest that on the mere basis of percentage of seats filled Cleveland is the worst sports town?

The Browns regularly draw 75,000 to 80,000 fans. And how many cities have 10,000 fans show up at an airport in the middle of the night to welcome their football team home after a victory—especially when the win (over Houston) wasn’t even in a playoff game?

As for the Cavs, in the 1975-76 season, when they almost went all the way, they set an NBA playoff attendance record of 21,564 (capacity for the Coliseum) and matched it in three subsequent playoff games.

The Indians have drawn more than a million in attendance the past two years, had more than 200,000 fans at one series last summer and have the largest opening-day crowd as the majors every year. Saying that Boston is a better sports town than Cleveland when Fenway Park holds fewer than half the people Cleveland Stadium does is absurd. When its teams win, Cleveland is the best sports town on earth.

DAVE WATSON
Mayfield, Ohio

Sir:

Isn’t it interesting that while Bob McMahon rates Boston as the best sports town in North America, it is reported in the same SCORECARD column that both the Bruins and the Celtics might move to a new sports complex in Salem, N.H.?

RAN MCMAHON
Williamstown, Mass.

Sir:

The best pro sports town is Houston.

TOMMY CORLEY
Waco, Texas

GEE WHIZ!

Sir:

Your Dec. 22-29 lead article on the revival of the Phoenix Suns (Phoenix Goes on the Attack) cites Forward Jeff Cook as one of those primarily responsible. However, it nowhere says that Cook was the center at Idaho State from 1976 to 1978, during which time Idaho State defeated UCLA in the Western Regional of the NCAA Championships. Moreover, several weeks ago you highlighted the national cross-country championships at Pocatello—but didn’t mention that they were sponsored by and located at Idaho State (Little Sister Wins a Race of Her Own, Dec. 8).

In previous years, you have mentioned Idaho State football when we lost badly—but continued



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Sports Illustrated
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19TH HOLE *continued*

not in 1990, when we bounced back better than any other school in NCAA Division IAA—from 0-11 to 6-5. ISU has a contending team in basketball and is doing nicely in football and track, thank you. And remember that Idaho State is the home of the very first Minidome.

The above information has been brought to my attention by our university librarian, Eli M. Oboler, a man who has been cited by his contemporaries on numerous occasions for his attention to detail, and who has been named by our university news service for the same.

MYRON L. COULTER
President
Idaho State University
Pocatello, Idaho

CROSS-COUNTRY

Sir:

Just when I was about to complain about your lack of coverage of Nordic skiing, John Hildebrand came through with an article that captures the essence of the sport (First Pursues, Dec. 15). Although I wouldn't consider subjecting my body to -10° temperatures, his article relates well to my Nordic skiing experiences in northeast Indiana. Even here the glaciers of the Ice Age have left their mark.

GARY (KICK AND GLIDE) ERVIN
Fort Wayne, Ind.

WE AND MINE

Sir:

I've read the article by that Michael Baughman guy on tide-pool fishing in Oregon (FOOTLOOSE, Dec. 15). His arrogant attitude about Californians makes me sick! My brother Bob is an Oregonian (via Washington) with an identical attitude. He thinks every tree and fish is their personal property, not to be shared with Californians. Where does Baughman get his selfishness? Bob gets his from Dad, who emigrated to Kansas from the Tyrol. Dad tended to pull the ladder up behind himself, too. I think Oregon resources should be available for all to share—even Californians.

Uh-oh. I hear shots on the north forty. I'd better get up there. Those blankety-blanks from Missouri are always after my quail.

DON SOTTA
McCurie, Kans.

CARDS ON THE TABLE (CONT.)

Sir:

I can assure you that reader Kevin T. Pesta (19TH HOLE, Dec. 22-29) isn't crazy just because he has his Strat-O-Matic Baseball cards run laps around the kitchen table after a bad game. In my law school league at the University of Michigan, team managers routinely brought their cards down to the law school cafeteria for team meals.

MICHAEL A. MARLEJO
Cincinnati

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Based on the EPA Interior Volume Index, our five-passenger Phoenix Hatchback offers more room than the four-place Dasher.

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Carlton Box (lowest of all brands)	less than 0.01	0.002
Carlton Soft Pack	1	0.1
Carlton 100's Box	1	0.1
Carlton 100's Soft Pack	less than 6	0.5
Kent	11	0.9
Kent 100's	14	1.0
Merit	8	0.6
Merit 100's	10	0.7
Vantage	11	0.8
Vantage 100's	12	0.9
Winston Lights	14	1.1
Winston Lights 100's	13	1.0



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100's Soft Pack: Less than 6 mg. "tar", 0.5 mg. nicotine;
100's Menthol: 5 mg. "tar", 0.4 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Dec. '79.